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Memorial Edition

PLAYS BY CLYDE FITCH

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOLUME THREE

THE STUBBORNNESS OF GERALDINE
THE GIRL WITH THE GREEN EYES
HER OWN WAY

EDITED BY MONTROSE J. MOSES
AND VIRGINIA GERSON

42282

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1920

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE first act of "The Stubbornness of Geraldine" (a play which, much to the amusement of Mr. Fitch, was burlesqued by Weber and Fields as "The Stickiness of Gelatine") is marked by two popular characteristics in the dramatist's work: a very clever and unusual stage set, and an easy handling of minor details, which served to bring into high light the human foibles of minor characters. In the reading — and much more so, in the acting — the spontaneity and genuine good-natured observation of Mr. Fitch are delightful, and contain a humor more searching than the mere external value of the details might suggest. In such a play as this one — with a later extravagant piling up of detail in "Girls" — the dramatist called down upon him the censure of critics, who claimed that much of his serious intent was obscured by his refreshing habit — however provoking it might have been

to the Press — of marking time by the use of brilliant "slices of life", having no inherent connection with the main plot or with the main characterization. Yet, though there may be critical justification for such an attitude, it would be difficult for any stage manager to cut, for example, from "The Girl With the Green Eyes", such an inimitable scene as that in the Vatican (Act II), with the tourists.

Undoubtedly, the source of "The Stubbornness of Geraldine," as far as its opening act was concerned, lay in Mr. Fitch's own experiences as a bad sailor. The following reveals him in a typical sailor mood. "Here I am in London again, but *not* right side up! — thanks to the awful channel, which turned me inside out! Ugh! Worse than ever — I came the long (cheap) way! Never again. As C. F. [Charles Frohman] says, I've been working like mad. I just stopped writing now, 1:45, A.M. But I must at least start a letter before I go to my cold, damp bed (as it is in London in September!). . . ." There does not seem to have been any other evident desire on his part, in writing this light little comedy, than to afford a pleasing vehicle for a definite "star." From London, on May 24, 1902, he wrote: "I have finished my Mannering play! . . . It seems to me all right, but I am too close

to it as yet. I can tell better in a month's time. There is a very funny (I hope) young girl character [The Girl from Butte] in the piece, which ought to score almost as well as Mrs. Brown [Mrs. Gilbert's part in "The Girl and the Judge"]."

In this same letter he wrote: "I have also finished, to-day, Act I of Mrs. Bloodgood's play" ["The Girl with the Green Eyes"]—a subject he continually referred to. An early reference is found in a note from London, September 26, 1894. He wrote: "We'll have lots of fun this Winter (serious fun, because it's not altogether comedy), as I shall be writing on my 'jealousy' play. Wait till you hear the idea!"

After "The Girl with the Green Eyes" was finished, there was some doubt as to whether or not the heroine should be called Jinny. Under date of July 3, 1902, we find this clear-cut comment: "You see I want a diminutive name that shall express affection from the speaker, and yet be a little strong. Jinny has a certain strength and character that Molly and Dolly or anything I can think of haven't got." We refer to this, as having no vital bearing on the main theme of his play, but as distinctly pointing to the care he gave to minor values in characterization.

"Her Own Way" was written expressly for Miss Maxine Elliott, as was also "Her Great

Match," and it is an example of Mr. Fitch's adaptability to specific temperament. There is no concrete source for this play; there is only the popular fictionist's idea to blend sentiment with an entertaining story. Sam Coast, however, was definitely worked out and developed as evidence of Mr. Fitch's masculine touch — so persistently were critics scoring him for his clever manipulation of feminine detail. Those in correspondence with the dramatist at this time will recollect the Scotson-Clark picture postcard for "Her Own Way" — representing a striped sofa on which are seated the actress and the playwright — the latter reading aloud from the script of his drama.

This third volume contains plays representative of Mr. Fitch's prolific period at its height. Yet it was temperamentally true of him that he was always "working like mad." On one of the very last trips he made to New York from Katonah, his mind full of the coming production of "The City", and the future of a new comedy and a new "star", he was unable to see a friend, and wrote explaining why. This explanation consisted of an enumeration of eighteen engagements kept between 4 : 45 one afternoon and 3 : 30 the next afternoon. In that time he interviewed actors, engaged several players for the cast of "The City", rehearsed members of "The Blue

Mouse" company, which was scheduled to open in Chicago, had several business talks, arranged for the shipping of his motor-car to Europe, supervised the scenery for "The City", and finally visited his doctor and dentist.

This was a typical routine day spent in town. Even then, Mr. Fitch's health was far from encouraging, and the doctors were trying to persuade him to remain quietly at home. And there he would in all probability have remained, had it not been for the unprecedented London success of "The Woman in the Case", and Mr. Arthur Bourchier's splendid cables regarding it. We mention this as indication of the extravagant use Mr. Fitch always made of his vitality. His inventive period reached its top speed about the time of the productions of the plays in this volume — a speed sustained for many years; but his entire career was marked by a continuous expenditure of prolific vitality. He gave all thought to his plays, his public, and his friends; — little thought to himself.

MONTROSE J. MOSES,
VIRGINIA GERSON.

NEW YORK,
JULY, 1915.

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THE STUBBORNNESS OF GERALDINE

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

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TO

E. S.

"THE ONLY WAY TO HAVE
A FRIEND IS TO BE ONE"
—*EMERSON*

FOR MANY YEARS YOU HAVE BEEN THE BEST

THE STUBBORNNESS OF GERALDINE

ACT I. GERALDINE, TWO DAYS FROM THE END OF HER VOYAGE HOME, FINDS LIFE SUDDENLY TAKING ON A NEW INTEREST.

ACT II. GERALDINE, IN THE VERY HOUR OF HER ARRIVAL, STUMBLES ON THE OLD ADAGE, "THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE NEVER DID RUN SMOOTH."

ACT III. GERALDINE MEETS ONE OF THE BITTER EPISODES OF LIFE WITH THE DETERMINATION TO LET NO ONE SOLVE HER PROBLEM FOR HER.

ACT IV. THE STUBBORNNESS OF GERALDINE.

"No woman can pretend she loves a man, unless she has faith in him, and the only one able to destroy that faith should be the man she loves." — ACT III.

CHARACTERS

GERALDINE LANG.
VI TOMPSON.
MRS. WRIGHTON.
FRÄULEIN HANDT.
MRS. JARS.
MRS. MATHEWSON.
MRS. DREED.
FIRST LADY PASSENGER — MRS. WHIPPLE.
SECOND LADY PASSENGER — MISS PINEY.
THIRD LADY PASSENGER — MISS LANSING.
STEWARDESS.
ANOTHER LADY PASSENGER.
COUNT CARLOS KINSEY.
MR. WRIGHTON.
LORD TILBURY.
MR. CRAGER.
JARS.
STEWARD.
THORNTON.
MAN PASSENGER.
EXPRESSMAN.
THE SHIP'S DOCTOR.
OTHER GUESTS AND PASSENGERS.

Originally produced at the Hyperion Theatre, New Haven, and on November 3, 1902, at the Garrick Theatre, New York, with the following cast: —

Geraldine Lang	Mary Mannering
Vi Tompson	Amy Ricard
Mrs. Wrighton	Mrs. Hone
Fräulein Handt	Anita Rothe
Mrs. Jars	Rosa Cooke
Mrs. Mathewson	Marian Gardiner
Mrs. Dreed	Kathleen Chambers
Mrs. Harry K. Whipple	Dene Woodruff
Miss Piney	Florence Stewart
Molly Lansing	Florence Breed
Stewardess	Carolyn James
Another Lady Passenger	Anna Archer
Count Carlos Kinsey	Arthur Byron
Mr. Wrighton	John Saville
Lord Tilbury	H. Hassard-Short
Mr. Crager	Albert S. Howson
Jars	Herbert Ayling
Steward	Charles Martin
Thornton	Sidney Mansfield
Man Passenger	Charles Haskins
Expressman	David Proctor
The Ship's Doctor	George Elwood

ACT I

The deck of a ship. The railing is at the footlights, and beyond it, against the cabin's sides, are rows of steamer chairs facing the audience. At Right of the Centre are double doors to the principal gangway; at Left of the Centre is a gangway through to the other side of the ship, where the audience sees the railing and the sea and sky beyond. Along this gangway promenaders are constantly passing. Most of the steamer chairs have their bored occupants in them, and scattered about there is still the paraphernalia of a voyage two-thirds finished. There are half-empty lemonade glasses perilously placed beside chairs, remnants of once white grapes, like tawdry boarding-house keepers who have seen better days, on

white plates tucked into out-of-the-way corners. A conversational child is conspicuous. It is late afternoon.

There is a few moments' silence; then a MAN PASSENGER, *reading, turns a page. The* CHILD *drops her doll and picks it up. A* MAN, *on his way around the ship, walks rapidly from Right to Left in a businesslike manner of taking exercise. After him* TWO GIRLS, *arm in arm, walk more slowly, talking, and disappear at Right.*

WOMAN PASSENGER. [*Querulously.*] Steward!

STEWARD. [*Off stage, Right.*] Coming, madam!

[*He enters.*

MAN PASSENGER. Steward!

STEWARD. [*Hesitates at centre.*] Yes, sir!

WOMAN PASSENGER. *Steward!!*

STEWARD. Yes, madam.

[*Going to the* WOMAN *and tucking in her shawl.*

WOMAN PASSENGER. I want some lemonade, steward!

STEWARD. [*Going toward Right.*] Yes, miss.

WOMAN PASSENGER. [*Calls after him.*] With ice, plenty of ice, steward!

STEWARD. Yes, miss.

[*Going.*

MAN PASSENGER. Steward!

STEWARD. [*Stopping near him.*] Yes, sir.

MAN PASSENGER. Can you tell me if this damned boat is *ever* going to get across?

STEWARD. Yes, sir, we ought to land in another day, sir.

[MAN PASSENGER *grunts.*

[STEWARD *goes out at Right.*

[*The* MAN *again walks rapidly by from Right to Left on his fourteenth lap and passes out of sight.*

FRÄULEIN. [*A thin, sweet-faced German woman,*

wearing glasses, and inappropriately dressed for a voyage.] A loafly day, not? Yust ass glass, only for de pig swells dat come efery leetle once. Here comes one now!

THE LADY WITH THE CHILD. Take care, Rosalie!

[*The* STEWARD *at the same time comes out of door with lemonade, and the ship rolls heavily forward, then back. Each motion is accompanied by loud screams, shouts, and laughter, and a great clatter of crockery and glass. Oranges and empty glasses and cups roll down to the footlights, and some of the passengers are almost thrown off their chairs. The* STEWARD *is obliged to hang on to the doorway. When the lurch is over, a great sigh of relief goes up from those on the deck.*

MAN PASSENGER. Steward! Is that going to happen again?

STEWARD. I don't know, sir.

[*The* STEWARD *goes to the* WOMAN PASSENGER.

FRÄULEIN. [*To anybody, laughing.*] Dat vas ein *corker!*

STEWARD. Lemonade, madam.

WOMAN PASSENGER. Thanks. [*The* STEWARD *tucks up her shawl and makes her more comfortable.*] I'd like some prunes for my dinner, steward.

STEWARD. [*Starting to go.*] Very good, madam.

WOMAN PASSENGER. Steward!

STEWARD. [*Stopping.*] Yes, madam.

WOMAN PASSENGER. When will we get in?

STEWARD. Couldn't say, madam.

WOMAN PASSENGER. Well, I wish you'd go to the captain of this boat and say that Mrs. Harry K. Whipple, of Salem, Mass., would like to know just when we *do* get there!

STEWARD. Yes, madam.

[*Going toward Right, stops to tuck in a passenger.*

[*The* MAN, *the amateur pedestrian, walks rapidly by from Right to Left again. The* TWO GIRLS *pass him and join the* FRÄULEIN. *One of these is* VI TOMPSON, *a breezy, natural, whole-souled, perfectly untrammelled girl of the soil — a western Eve. Her companion is a more colourless young person, the sort of girl that would be content to rest in the contrasted shade of* VI'S *vivacious spirits.*

VI. It would be a perfect day, wouldn't it, if it weren't for these awful swells every little while — they make you feel just like express elevators, don't they?

FRÄULEIN. Vere iss Mees Geraldine?

VI. Oh, she's all right! She's playing thing-um-bob — you know that game — in the bow with

the English Lord. My *dear!* It's *such a case!* I think you're the sweetest chaperon, or companion, or whatever you are, that ever was! *Really,* I do!

FRÄULEIN. Oh, Mees Geraldine iss quite safe. She nefer need no chaperong!

VI. Well, I only wish mamma was like you! I tell you it's lucky for me she's so seasick, or I shouldn't be having any fun with the Doctor at all! [*This latter added in a more confidential manner and amusedly.*] ISN'T he *handsome!* Oh, my! And when we walk, you know, he goes so fast I *have* to take his arm to keep up with him! — *have to!!!* [*Laughs.*] Well! I think he's *perfectly* lovely — that's all! *Perfectly!*

FRÄULEIN. And where iss your fader — that he haf not see —

[*Interrupted.*

VI. Oh, popper never sees anything, even on shore, except figures and numbers. And on board he lies in the smoking room all day. He's made all our fees at poker, and won three pools besides! Popper's awfully clever!

[*The* MAN *walks by again from Right to Left, and* VI'S *friend pulls her arm to notice him.*

VI. [*Looks at him, and then turns to* FRÄULEIN.] *I* don't think he's so good-looking, do you? Jess is crazy about him. But of course I'm colour blind, anyway; all I can see just now is *brass buttons!* HE'S going to give me one for a hat-pin! *Really!* [*They start to walk again, and she calls back over her shoulder.*] Won't that be *perfectly lovely!*

[*A* STEWARDESS, *carrying a hot-water bag, followed by a* STEWARD, *lead out from the double doorway the figure of a pale woman, pretty well enveloped in wraps of an indiscriminate sort.*

They place her carefully in an empty chair Left of FRÄULEIN.

VI. [*Stopping.*] Oh, here's Miss Piney! I'm so glad you're feeling better.

STEWARDESS. Oh, yes, she'll be hall right now she's hup and hout in the hair!

VI. Yes, indeed! And it's a beautiful day!

[MISS PINEY *rolls her eyes, as much as to say at present there can be no beauty in any day for her.*

FRÄULEIN. Unt de sea yust like a mill pond — parfecdly smoot except yust every leetle once!

VI. You *look* splendidly, Miss Piney, *not at all* ill!

[MISS PINEY *is safe in her chair by now, and well wrapped, from her feet with overshoes,*

to her head in its baby-blue crocheted arrangement. The hot-water bag is at her feet. She gives a long sigh, and lies quite still with her eyes shut.

[*The* STEWARDESS *goes back, downstairs.*

STEWARD. [*To* VI.] Excuse me, miss, your mother asked me to tell you she wanted to see you.

[*He follows the* STEWARDESS.

VI. Oh, pshaw! Mamma's too boring! She's always sending for me to ask if I've found out when we land, or if popper's drinking too much. And how can I tell? [*To* FRÄULEIN.] Say, if the Doctor should come by here alone, won't you grab him, please, and try to keep him till I come back? I just hate to leave the deck for five minutes — because, of course, every other girl on this boat, not to mention the five *widows*, *crape* and *grass*,

are all dying to get him away from me! But I'm not afraid of you! — You know what I mean!

[*And with her arm about her friend, she goes out through the double doors.*

FRÄULEIN. [*To* MISS PINEY.] I hope dat yer vas feeling much better as already!

[MISS PINEY *opens her eyes to give* FRÄULEIN *one miserable and speechless glance, and then closes them again.*

[*The* MAN *walks on from Right, but as the ship sways far forward, stops, with his legs wide apart to steady himself. Again there are cries and laughter, the noise of crockery and glass colliding; several people slide from their chairs. Down the passageway Left, half run, half fall* LORD TILBURY *and* GERALDINE.

[GERALDINE *is a very handsome girl, with the love of life in her face and speech and manner;*

like Vi, *she is whole-souled and unaffected, but she is more cultivated than* Vi, *more emotional, and with a more tender sense of humour.*

[TILBURY *is a very good-looking, very smart-looking young Englishman, a "good sort," who needs, however, more experience and more years than the average man to get him out of his salad days.*

GERALDINE. [*Cries out.*] Lord Tilbury!

[*She clutches him to save herself from falling. He falls, but she remains standing, and all brace themselves for the return roll of the ship. This being duly accomplished, the travellers settle down again. The* STEWARDS *run hither and thither, and* GERALDINE *helps* LORD TILBURY *to rise.*

TILBURY. Thanks awfully. So glad it wasn't you!

GERALDINE. [*Laughing.*] So am I!

[MISS PINEY *slowly rises, feebly, and with difficulty extricates herself from her belongings.* GERALDINE *and* TILBURY *hurry to assist her to the doorway, where the* STEWARDESS *takes her and she retires.*

GERALDINE. Miss Piney's even a worse sailor than *you*, Lord Tilbury.

TILBURY. But really — I haven't been seasick. Really! Really! It was only a cold with dizziness.

GERALDINE. [*Laughs pleasantly at him.*] I know that cold! And Miss Piney, she has *heart weakness*, that's all — she's not seasick. O dear, no! Only heart weakness!

TILBURY. And what is *your* pet illness?

GERALDINE. I *love* the sea, and never am ill on it.

TILBURY. And on the land?

GERALDINE. I never am ill on the land, either!

TILBURY. Really! what a beastly healthy person!

GERALDINE. Oh, do hit some wood quick or my luck may change. [*She stamps on the deck with her right heel. He follows her action.*] Thank you! I think I'll sit down. [*Sitting on the arm of* FRÄULEIN'S *chair.*] Do you know my friend, Fräulein Handt?

[*She introduces them.*

FRÄULEIN. I 'ave knowed your fader at sight, Lord Tilbury. I vas one time governess in de Austro-Hungary Embassy, unt he vas often to de house.

TILBURY. Really! *I* don't know my father very well!

FRÄULEIN. Ah, but dat vas ven you vas at school.

[*She settles back in her chair to let them talk together without her.*

GERALDINE. Are you coming down to dinner, Fräulein?

FRÄULEIN. I tink not, I go sleeping now.

[*Closes her eyes.*

GERALDINE. [*Amused, aside to* TILBURY.] The dear creature thinks that's *tact!*

[*Both laugh gently.*

TILBURY. She's an awfully good sort, isn't she? How long have you been abroad, Miss Lang?

GERALDINE. One hundred years!

TILBURY. Really!!

GERALDINE. Well, it seems that! Ever since I can remember; I came over here at the age of five!

TILBURY. Really!

GERALDINE. I haven't a relative in the world, but I've some property in New York, and that is my home, and I'm happy to say at last I'm going back!

TILBURY. *Really!*

GERALDINE. [*Laughingly.*] *If* you say "*really*" again, I think I shall die!!

TILBURY. I beg your pardon —

[*Interrupted.*

GERALDINE. I'm sure it must sound very strange to you, but it's really very simple! At the age of four I was left to my last relative, an uncle, a — I have gathered and imagined and *intuitived* — *rather gay person*, who wouldn't accept a little girl niece as a gift!

TILBURY. You might be in the way, I suppose!

GERALDINE. Exactly! Who says Englishmen are dense!! So he railroaded me off to Stuttgart — of all dull places! — with a dear old German lady, the aunt of Fräulein. Didn't he, Fräulein?

FRÄULEIN. Yah!

GERALDINE. [*Amused, to* TILBURY.] Not asleep

yet! Well, when *she* followed all my other relatives, except Uncle Ray, she left me in charge of my friend here, who is the dearest thing in the world — aren't you, Fräulein? [FRÄULEIN *snores.*] She's only pretending! She's too modest to answer that question. [FRÄULEIN *giggles.*] I told you! [*They stroll down to the rail and lean on it, looking over.*] Well — now my uncle died last month, and he's left me a big fortune and a magnificent new house.

TILBURY. He left you everything?!

GERALDINE. Everything!!

TILBURY. He never married, then?

GERALDINE. No; they say he never could decide on *which!*

TILBURY. Isn't there any one there you know?

GERALDINE. Yes, the old housekeeper, and

her husband, who is butler. I have childish memories about them both. Mrs. Jars was a dear, fat, jolly woman, with a pocket never empty of sweets — Oh, *I* loved her!

TILBURY. Are you glad to be going back to America?

GERALDINE. Glad!?! *Glad!!* Surely an Englishman knows what love of one's country means! — how it's born in one, and nothing ever gets it out! Let me tell you something! The day I sailed, a pale, small, timid girl, this same uncle gave me, to wave from the boat, a little stars and stripes; Uncle Ray DID *love* his country — as well as a few other things! Perhaps you'll think it silly of me, but from that day to this I've never let go that little flag. I've travelled all over Europe, but never went to sleep one night without it under my pillow at first, and afterward in a little sort of amulet

about my neck [*Taking hold of a chain she wears.*], when it threatened to become *rags! Glad* to go back to America? It's what I've been dreaming of, longing for, *waiting* for on tiptoe since the very hour I left fourteen years ago! *Glad!!!* I don't pretend to explain; I can only tell you that even to *speak of going back* fills me with an emotion I don't understand. I feel it here! [*Her hand over her bosom.*] And here! [*At her throat.*] It's — why — it's *home*, you know, that's all!

TILBURY. I know what you mean. I felt it in South Africa.

GERALDINE. [*With quick interest and sympathy.*] Were you in *many battles* there?

TILBURY. No, but I was in *all* the hospitals!

GERALDINE. [*She laughs.*] Let's walk. [*To* FRÄULEIN.] We're going to walk up and down a little, just here in front of you.

FRÄULEIN. [*Without opening her eyes.*] Oh! I vas not afraid ven you vill be lost! But don't forget dat a long time de first horn for tinner have tooted!

GERALDINE. [*As they begin to walk.*] Now I've told you the story of *my* life. Tell me yours! Is this your first visit to America?

TILBURY. Yes, I've been to Ireland and Paris, besides South Africa, but of course New York is different.

GERALDINE. But *New York* isn't *America!*

TILBURY. No, I suppose not — there's Chicago, isn't there, and Washington — [*Stops walking.*] — only I hear that's very cosmopolitan, — and there *used* to be a Boston, didn't there?

GERALDINE. Horrors!!

TILBURY. Across a bridge?

GERALDINE. [*With relief.*] Oh! you're mixed;

there used to be Brooklyn, but now it's greater New York!

[*They start to move on again and meet* VI *coming with the* DOCTOR *from the opposite direction. As they pass,* VI *catches hold of* GERALDINE'S *arm, holding her back, and speaks in her ear, the* DOCTOR *standing a step or two in advance of her, and* TILBURY *discreetly waiting a few steps in front of* GERALDINE.

VI. I think you're just too mean for anything to keep a real live lord all alone to yourself. Still, I'm not mad, because I'VE got second prize! Don't you think he's *perfectly lovely!*

GERALDINE. [*Amused.*] Who?

VI. Why, the *Doctor!*

GERALDINE. Perfectly.

VI. [*Going on with the* DOCTOR, *calls back.*] I'll exchange!

GERALDINE. [*Calls over her shoulder.*] All right!

TILBURY. She's a jolly sort of girl. Where does she come from?

GERALDINE. Her home is in Butte City, Montana.

TILBURY. Really!

GERALDINE. O dear, that awful word's come back! Are you coming over to us to *get married?*

TILBURY. No, just the opposite. [*They stop walking.*] So as *not* to get married.

GERALDINE. [*Opening her eyes wide.*] "Really!" I'm afraid you're going to the wrong place! You ought to have gone to where I've been — Stuttgart! *Somebody's* SURE to marry YOU in *America!*

[*They go on.*

TILBURY. No; you see it's this way. I'm

awfully keen to marry Rosy Boggs. She's in the Gaiety. Maybe you've seen her in the *Toreador*. She's the third from the end on the right all through the first act, and is the one that says, "He didn't go this way!" [*Eagerly.*] Do you remember her?

GERALDINE. I don't think so.

TILBURY. Perhaps you remember her in the last act. She's on the opposite side in that act, and she substitutes in the octette when any one of the other girls are ill. [*Stops.*] But perhaps you don't go every night. I've only missed two performances, and one was a matinée.

GERALDINE. No, I wasn't in London long, and I didn't go to the Gaiety regularly.

TILBURY. Well, you'd have seen she's a *lady born*, only her parents are a bit offish; the father keeps a public house, and Rosy began behind his bar, but she was too refined and couldn't stand it.

My governor's so obtuse he won't see Rosy a little bit, and threatens to cut me off with a ha'penny — isn't it awful!

GERALDINE. If I loved her, I'd marry her anyway.

TILBURY. But Rosy *won't!*

GERALDINE. Oh, then, Rosy doesn't love *you.*

TILBURY. Yes, she does! She's *awful* gone on me, but she's so *noble!* She says she won't marry me unless my father relents, because she couldn't bear to have me cut off with a ha'penny, — don't you see, — on her account?

GERALDINE. Oh, yes, I think I *do see!*

[*Laughing.*

[GERALDINE *sings a couple of lines of "Rosy, you are my Posy."*

TILBURY. I say, you're awfully sympathetic. I've been awful keen to talk to somebody about it.

We're all in hopes I'll forget Rosy over here, but I'm afraid I won't.

[*Bugle call for dinner, in the distance.*

GERALDINE. Just wait! You've no idea what damage American girls can do to a little memory like that.

TILBURY. You know you remind me a little of Rosy — if you won't mind my saying it.

GERALDINE. Goodness — already! If *I've* shaken your precious souvenir the least little bit, Miss Vi Tompson of Butte City, in her own language, "won't do a thing to it!"

[*A* STEWARD *appears and gives loud bugle call for dinner. Many more people have been promenading during the end of this scene, and the speeches have been broken, interrupted, and continued, etc., as* GERALDINE *and* TILBURY *have made way for the others to pass them. The*

sun has also sunk; there is the clear light without the yellow of the sun, leaving only red and gold seen in the clouds over the horizon. At the sound of the call all rise from their chairs except WOMAN PASSENGER *and* FRÄULEIN. *A* STEWARD *hurries in, and is busy helping the women, while another with the menu card waits on* FRÄULEIN *and* WOMAN PASSENGER. *There is a general crowd walking about on the deck.*

GERALDINE. [*Casually.*] The last call. I suppose we must go down!

[*They move on and meet* VI. GERALDINE, *with* TILBURY, *pauses and stops* VI.

GERALDINE. Miss Tompson.

VI. My dear, aren't you going down?

GERALDINE. I want to present Lord Tilbury to you.

VI. How do you do, Lord Tilbury. [TILBURY

bows.] I *am* pleased to make your acquaintance. I saw you the first day out, and I wanted to know you then, you had such a perfectly lovely suit of clothes on. Didn't he, Miss Lang! It was the *sweetest suit* on the boat! But you *disappeared* for several days, till this morning!

TILBURY. Yes, I caught a bad cold.

VI. [*Laughs.*] Oh, come! It's been *terribly* rough! I don't mind confessing that *I* was awfully seasick. I wanted to go straight down to the bottom, Paris clothes and all! Which reminds me of the *killingest* story popper told us he heard from the second officer. Oh, but I don't know Lord Tilbury well enough to tell him funny stories yet.

TILBURY. I hope after dinner we may become much better acquainted, and shall look forward with pleasure to the story. You will be on deck after dinner?

VI. Oh, yes, I think it's perfectly lovely on deck at night! I just adore the stars and the moonlight, don't you! It makes you feel so happy and sociable. Oh, I just think it's too *lovely* for anything. Yes, siree!

TILBURY. Till after dinner, then!

[*He bows.*

VI. Good-by!

GERALDINE. Good-by!

TILBURY. Good-by.

[*He goes downstairs.*

VI. Oh, my dear, I think he's perfectly lovely! And it was just too sweet of you for worlds to introduce him. *Most* girls would have kept him locked up in the ice box.

GERALDINE. Come along, we must go too.

VI. [*Laughingly.*] I'm so mad! Mamma's coming down to dinner to-night. You know I've

had the table alone with popper and a whole lot of men, and I do think men *are so nice*, don't you! — and now mamma'll come down and *cut me right out!*. You know mamma's the sweetest thing that ever was! She is really! But you've never seen *her*, have you? Well, you must to-morrow if she's up. See you later.

[*She goes downstairs, through the double doors.*

[STEWARD *gives* FRÄULEIN *her basket of food, and passing on to* WOMAN PASSENGER, *serves her also. Then he goes out.*

[GERALDINE *goes to* FRÄULEIN.

GERALDINE. Fräulein!

FRÄULEIN. Yes, tear, can't you guess for vy I vas staying?

GERALDINE. [*Delighted.*] To see who it is leaves the white rose every night during dinner on my chair?!

FRÄULEIN. You vas right!

GERALDINE. You darling, — but if he sees you here, he won't leave the rose.

FRÄULEIN. You know it iss a *he*, den?

GERALDINE. I don't *know*, but I *hope* it is a *he!* I have all sorts of ideas about it. Nothing half so romantic ever happened to me before in my life!

FRÄULEIN. Vell, ven I eats, I keep von sharb lookoud, unt ven I see someting, I am asleep, so!

GERALDINE. Good! [*Kisses her.*] I shall be back before very long. I'm not hungry, and I can't sit through these awful dinners.

[*She goes hurriedly through the double doors.*

FRÄULEIN *eats.*

[*Twilight is falling, and the red is dying out of the sky.*

WOMAN PASSENGER. *Steward!*

STEWARD. [*Entering Left with a basket-tray full of used dishes.*] Yes, madam.

WOMAN PASSENGER. [*Querulously.*] My baked potatoes aren't baked and my beefsteak is a mutton chop.

STEWARD. Very sorry, madam. Shall I —

WOMAN PASSENGER. No, no matter, I'll eat it, but it's stone cold. I shall never cross on this *line* again! I never saw such food. [STEWARD *starts to go, but stops as she speaks.*] Steward! Bring me some champagne with ice, plenty of ice.

STEWARD. Yes, madam.

[*He goes through the double doors.*

[*As he goes,* COUNT CARLOS KINSEY *appears from Right and comes toward* GERALDINE'S *empty chair; when he gets near enough to see* FRÄULEIN, *he starts and stops. But* FRÄULEIN *has heard him coming and seems to be asleep,*

with her head turned away. KINSEY *comes carefully along and lays a white rose in* GERALDINE'S *chair. At this moment* FRÄULEIN *pretends to wake up with a start, crying,* "Oh!"

KINSEY. [*Also starts and bows low.*] I beg a pardon.

FRÄULEIN. Vith pleasure! [*She looks in the chair and sees the rose.*] Excuse me, I tink you drop someting?

KINSEY. No, I look at ze rose which have blossomed where ze young lady vas!

FRÄULEIN. Aber! Mein Gott, it iss Count Kinsey! [*Rising.*]

KINSEY. Sh! Please.

[TWO GIRLS *pass by, talking.*

KINSEY. Zat is true, I vas Count Carlos Kinsey. [*With another bow.*] You please sit down? But how *you* know ME! I nefer haf see you!

FRÄULEIN. [*Sitting on side of chair.*] I vas de governess a liddle vile in your ungle's family ven he vas ambassador at London, and I 'ave you seen dere, ven you vas for a leedle while secretary.

KINSEY. Yess, mine older broder Adolph's place I have take. My broder, Count Kinsey, he leaf London, but I not happy there and I just six months have stayed.

FRÄULEIN. Yes, dat vas ven I vas dere, and ven your ungle have vent to Paris, I have been now de companion to de young lady of de white roses.

KINSEY. All dat iss *very* well! If you have lived wiz mine uncle, you vill do his nephew a one great favour, not?

FRÄULEIN. Yah. [*She adds in German.*] Let us speak German, it will be so much easier for us both.

KINSEY. Nein, it besser iss we talk English for

ze practice, vill you not for me? Fräulein, pleaze, gif to me your promise, your — I tink ze word — sacred honour zat you vill not tell Meess Lang!

FRÄULEIN. You know Meess Geraldine's name?

KINSEY. Yess! I ask for eet ze first time vat I hafe see her in Budapesth.

FRÄULEIN. Oh, dat vill pleaze her romantic heart!

KINSEY. Gif to me your sacred promise you vill not tell to her mine name, or who I are!

FRÄULEIN. Vy?

KINSEY. It can no harm do. Vill you promise — not?

FRÄULEIN. Yah — but vy?

KINSEY. [*Very simply.*] I loaf her!

[*A second's pause.*

FRÄULEIN. Oh! Dat is peautiful! But den, vy don't you vant to know her?

KINSEY. I am one crazy man to know her, and you vill me present her, not? By anozer name! Mistair Carlman.

FRÄULEIN. I understand nuttings! —

KINSEY. I vas forefer now to be only Mistair Carlman. I hafe no money. I hafe came over here in ze second class so zat I vas on ze same boat wiz her, — and in America I find me work, and become an American working gentleman, not? I play ze violin, I make very quick ze figures. I paints a leetle and I dances very much! Oh, in America I very soon get me rich! Beside, I vas not of work afraid. I vill do anyzing that will gif me enough much money to beg Mees Lang dat she vill be mine vife, not becauze I vas one *count*, but becauze she loaf me! But she iss very rich, not?

[*He sighs.*

FRÄULEIN. Ach! *Awful* rich!

KINSEY. Ah! You see!! Zey must not tink me a *poor count* — I tink ze word — hunting? a rich American meess, so for zat I must mine name change. And mine family, they vould not listen zat I vas came over here to WORK at *anyzing*. They would tink I was crazy gone and lock me up, so for zat also I must change mine name!

FRÄULEIN. Och, Himmel! Yah! I see now, dat iss besser.

KINSEY. Oh, yess! it ees! because I vill not ask her before as I 'ave ze money to — how you say it? — "*make all ze bills?*"

FRÄULEIN. [*Laughing.*] Vell! dat vas vat SOME HUSBANDS do, but I tink YOU vould mean PAY *all de bills!*

KINSEY. Yess! I vill nefer life by mine vife's money. To ask of her to do zat vould insult me. — No! Nefer! I vait! —

FRÄULEIN. You vas right, for eferybody vould believe you vas after her fortune.

[TWO COUPLES, *and a* MAN *alone, smoking, pass by.*

KINSEY. And yet, perhaps, after all, she will loaf some one else! — not?

FRÄULEIN. She has keep all your roses.

KINSEY. But it ees perhaps so long before I can tell her I loaf her — before that I hafe ze money also to gife her!

[PEOPLE *begin to crowd the deck, men striking matches for their cigars and cigarettes. The sky is dark blue and stars come out. It is dark, and electric lights are turned on, two or three on the ceiling of the deck, one over the* FRÄULEIN. *Half of the crowd walks, laughing and talking, with the* MEN *smoking.*

VI. [*Comes along on her friend's arm and stops*

by FRÄULEIN.] Fräulein, there's a lovely ship awfully close on the other side, you ought to see it.

[*The cry of a ship on the other side is passed along the crowd, and they all go through the passageway or disappear at each end. Some of them can be seen through the passageway leaning over the far rail.*

[*The moon slowly rises.*

[TILBURY *has come out and goes to* FRÄULEIN.

KINSEY. [*As he sees* TILBURY *approach.*] *You vill not* tell her? — yes?

FRÄULEIN. I svear it, no!

TILBURY. You don't want to see the ship, Fräulein Handt?

FRÄULEIN. No, I vant only to see de *landt*, and I tink I must go now unt find Miss Geraldine.

You vill excuse me, Lord Tilbury, — you know Herr —

[*She hesitates, at a loss.*

KINSEY. [*Hesitates a moment, and then says.*] Carlman.

FRÄULEIN. He is from Budapesth, vere I have once lived. Good night.

KINSEY. Auf Wiedersehen.

TILBURY. Good night!

[TILBURY *and* KINSEY *come down to rail;* KINSEY *offers* TILBURY *a cigarette, and they light them during the dialogue that follows. The* STEWARD *goes about gathering up the rugs, etc.*

TILBURY. I had quite a pal in London from Budapesth — Count Kinsey, *the* Count Kinsey, the older brother. Thanks! [*Referring to the cigarette that Kinsey offers him.*] Everybody

called him Dolly at the Gaiety. Clever girls, those! His name was Adolph. Did you know him? Thanks!

[*Lighting his cigarette from a match of* KINSEY'S.

KINSEY. It is probably vile he vas in London then *I* vas in Budapesth.

[*Lights his own cigarette.*

TILBURY. He *was* a gay chap. His crowd was too tight a screw for me, but I knew him through Rosy. Do you know Rosy Boggs? She's rippin'! [KINSEY *looks puzzled.*] You've seen the *Toreador?*

KINSEY. Oh, yes!

TILBURY. That's Rosy! — the third from the end on the right all through the first act! It's a nice little part. She has a line in that act, "He didn't go this way!" And, by George, how she does say it! [*Delighted with the memory.*] Rippin'! Kinsey was daft for a year on the little American

girly who stood next to Rosy. He followed her to Russia in the autumn, and back, and she's only just now run off with an American jockey over here! But Kinsey's after her. I read in a paper the day we started that Count Kinsey sailed under an assumed name the same week as we did, chasing an American girl.

KINSEY. [*Really moved.*] Zat is very strange!

TILBURY. Oh, no, it isn't. You see Kinsey's got a lot of very nasty debts in London and Paris, and daren't show his face in Budapesth. Rosy says it's his American girly's been paying the little bills and that's why Kinsey's come over — he can't afford to lose her!

KINSEY. [*Draws himself up, angry but dignified.*] I beg your pardon.

TILBURY. What's up?

KINSEY. Nussing! I only could not help me one minute's resentful of such bad an accusation to — mine countryman!

VI. [*Passing.*] *Good evening!*

TILBURY. Good evening! Are you racing?

VI. Oh, no! [*Coming back quickly.*] Did you see the boat? Wasn't it perfectly lovely! I thought it looked too sweet over there! Mr. — Lord Tilbury, Molly, my friend Miss Lansing — from Altoona. [*Both acknowledge the introduction.* Have you seen the moon? Isn't it a *perfect* DEAR!

TILBURY. But I haven't seen it!

VI. You oughtn't to miss it, ought he, Molly! It's a real *American* moon, you know. You never saw anything like it before.

TILBURY. May I come along and see it now?

VI. Of course! We'll be perfectly delighted, won't we, Molly?

[*The three then go off Left, leaving* KINSEY *alone. He leans against the rail.*

[*Others pass by, including a* STEWARD.

KINSEY. Steward!

STEWARD. Yes, sir.

[*He comes to him.*

KINSEY. I vas stealing a very long visit zis night! —

STEWARD. That's all right, sir. Stay as long as you like, sir.

KINSEY. I tank you.

[*Gives him money.*

STEWARD. Thanks, sir.

[*He goes as* FRÄULEIN *and* GERALDINE *come out from the big doorway.* GERALDINE *goes to her chair and gets her rose.* FRÄULEIN *waits for her.*

KINSEY. Poor old Adolph! Vat a beasts he iss; but he cannot help dat, he always so vas.

[FRÄULEIN, *with* GERALDINE, *joins* KINSEY.

FRÄULEIN. Talking mit de stars?

KINSEY. No, I iss afraid I vas speaking to ze opposite direction!

FRÄULEIN. I vant to introduce you to Mees Lang.

[KINSEY *bows very low.*

FRÄULEIN. Herr—

[*She hesitates.*

KINSEY. Carlman.

GERALDINE. I am very glad to meet you, Herr Carlman.

[KINSEY *touches her hand for a second only. She leans on the rail beside him.* FRÄULEIN *is on her other side. The two forget* FRÄULEIN *is there.*

KINSEY. You vill excuse, me, please how I speak ze language?

GERALDINE. Oh, you speak splendidly! [*Kinsey demurs.*] Thank you so much for all the white roses.

KINSEY. I tank *you* for wearing zem!

[*A moment's pause.*

GERALDINE. [*Looking straight out over the rails.*] Isn't it a lovely evening!

KINSEY. [*Also looking straight out.*] Wunderschoen!

[*Another second's pause.* FRÄULEIN *steals away.*

[KINSEY *and* GERALDINE *speak softly under the influence of the evening.*

GERALDINE. Fräulein says you saw us in Budapesth, didn't you, Fräulein? [*Looking.*] Oh! She's gone. She's not very well to-day. Those big swells we had this afternoon weren't *congenial* to her!

KINSEY. I hafe saw you at ze ball at ze Countess Tratsky's.

GERALDINE. Yes, I was there, and I *did* have such a good time!

KINSEY. But you away hafe gone so early.

GERALDINE. Wasn't it horrid! But we were taking an early train the next morning. Were you one of those beautiful creatures in uniform, with lovely furred jackets hung over one shoulder?

KINSEY. I *vas* in a uniform.

GERALDINE. I adore the Hungarians!

KINSEY. [*Enthusiastically.*] Do you!!

GERALDINE. Yes — their music and costumes and manners, and all that.

KINSEY. Oh! But *I* hafe vent on to London also.

GERALDINE. *Did* you? Do you know London very well?

KINSEY. Oh, very vell; I have live zere; but dis time I go because zey tell me at your hotel zat you 'ave gone zere.

GERALDINE. That wasn't a very good reason, especially as *I* didn't know it.

KINSEY. Yess!

GERALDINE. What are you going to America for?

KINSEY. Vell! for one reason I go to — I tink ze word — earn? mine living.

GERALDINE. You'll have lots of splendid company doing that in America. And your other reason for going? It can't be to marry, or you wouldn't have begun with the other. Foreigners usually just jumble those two reasons up together.

KINSEY. I iss sorry, but I cannot tell you my ozer reason — not now!

GERALDINE. Oh, I beg your pardon, Mr. —

KINSEY. [*Hesitatingly.*] Carlman.

GERALDINE. Carlman, I'm afraid I was too curious.

KINSEY. No, no, Mees Lang, it was not so, and zere iss one sing I must — I tink ze word — I must discover you — mine name iss not Carlman. But you must not efer ask me ze real one — zat I can nefer tell.

GERALDINE. [*Half amused.*] I never will —

KINSEY. Zat is a promise?

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] Certainly, if you like.

KINSEY. You understand? I vas not — I tink ze word — *ashame* of mine name, it iss more possibility ashame of *me!*

GERALDINE. Why? What have you done?

KINSEY. Nussing! We hafe all nefer done nussing much, but over here I do *some* thing, *much, all zat I can.*

GERALDINE. [*Seeing a curious bundle he half conceals.*] Is that a violin?

KINSEY. Yes. It vas going with me after I left ze rose, far up in ze back to play to mineself a leettle.

GERALDINE. Oh, I wish you'd play a little here! Would you? Every one's on the other side because it's warmer! [*He is taking his violin from its wrapping.*] Oh, you will! How delightful!

KINSEY. I try unt sing you one leettle Viennese song. You like zat?

GERALDINE. I shall *love* it!

KINSEY. Yes, it *iss* a *loaf* song!

GERALDINE. But I shan't understand the words!

KINSEY. [*Smiling.*] No, zat is *why* I *dare* to sing him!

[KINSEY *sings an old Viennese love song — accompanying himself pizzicato on the violin.*

[*Toward the end one of the port-holes opens and a woman looks out. A group of young people led by* VI *and* TILBURY *come through the passage at Left and stand at the end to listen. When he finishes these people applaud.* KINSEY, *who has been lost in his song, starts, as does Geraldine.*

[*After the applause.*] Oh, ze beastly peoples!

[*Puts away his violin.*

GERALDINE. [*Shyly, but a little tenderly and smiling.*] *I wish I knew the words.*

[VI *and her friends sit in chairs by the staircase Left and on the stairs and on the rugs on the deck.*

KINSEY. I vill in English write it one ozer day — perhaps.

[*A second's pause.*

GERALDINE. [*Looking up.*] What a lovely night!

KINSEY. [*Gazing at her.*] I tink ze word — *most beautifulest!*

[VI *and her friends begin singing an old college song, "Uppidee! Uppidee!"*

GERALDINE. [*After a moment.*] They are singing an old American college song! I have it in a book of my father's. You know I'm going home for the first time in fourteen years. Can you imagine how I feel?

KINSEY. Yes, I feel ze same way!

GERALDINE. You can't! You're going *away* from home!

KINSEY. I don't know vere I vas going, but I feel most happiest!

[*Smiling.*

GERALDINE. But you won't tell me your true name?

KINSEY. Some day. But till zen you hafe promise you vill not ask me!

GERALDINE. And I won't — there's my word on it.

[*Gives him her hand.*

[VI *and her friends begin singing,* "*I was Seeing Nellie Home,*" *and continue till after the curtain has fallen.*

GERALDINE. But I may never see you again?

KINSEY. Oh, yes, I vill live me in New York.

GERALDINE. But New York is so *big!* Even in this little boat — think, we haven't met for five days!

KINSEY. Because I come ze second class. You know zis boat iss very — I tink ze word — *expensifes?* — but I must come on him!

GERALDINE. Why?

KINSEY. Because — you — vere — on board on him.

[*A second's pause.*

GERALDINE. I think we'd better *walk* a little, don't you?

KINSEY. Vy?

GERALDINE. Oh — I'm afraid the moonlight's — just a little — *catching! ? — ! —*

[*A second's pause, and they start off to walk as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

Two days later. The hallway of the late Mr. Raymond Lang's house in New York; a handsome room in warm gray Caen stone. On tall old gilt Italian torchères, at each side, are big branched candelabra. On the wall behind the stairs hangs a Gobelin tapestry. On the Left are the iron grills of the post door. On the Right is the door to the servants' quarters. The stairs run from Left Centre to Right. There is a door between the foot of the stairs Right Centre and Right, to a reception room.

As the curtain rises MRS. JARS, *a jolly, very stout,*

middle-aged housekeeper in black, with large black ribbon bow at her throat, is at the foot of the staircase and starts running up.

JARS. [*A typical upper-class servant, entering Right.*] What is it, Mrs. Jars?

MRS. JARS. Don't stop me, Mr. Jars; I forgot to put out the best embroidered towels in her bedroom, and she may be here now any minute!

JARS. [*With hauteur.*] I put out the towels, Mrs. Jars!

MRS. JARS. [*Coming downstairs.*] That was just like you now, Mr. Jars, athinking even of my work. Is it clean do you think?

[*Stooping to pick up something.*

JARS. I never saw a piece of your work that wasn't!

MRS. JARS. Duckie! [*And running to him, she*

kisses him.] But there, I've forgotten something else — the window in her room — it's aired quite enough now.

[*Hurrying upstairs.*

JARS. Mrs. Jars, you oughtn't to run up them stairs!

MRS. JARS. [*Puffing.*] It won't hurt me.

JARS. I was a-thinking of *the stairs!*

[MRS. JARS *laughs aloud. Door-bell rings.*

MRS. JARS. Land sakes, there she is! Wait till I get down.

[*Hurries breathlessly downstairs to Left Centre, smoothing herself down, and trying to look very dignified.* JARS *also composes himself and opens the door. A* MESSENGER BOY *hands in a box of roses and a note.*

JARS. Flowers for us!

MRS. JARS. [*Taking box.*] Mercy on us, if she

ain't gone and sent us one of them wireless messages!

[*She opens the box, as* JARS *opens the letter.*

JARS. It's from Mrs. Wrighton.

MRS. JARS. Oh! — Now ain't she good, and sending Mr. Wrighton down to the boat to meet her, too.

JARS. She says for us to put them in the hall to welcome Miss Geraldine.

MRS. JARS. [*With the roses out of the box.*] Beautiful! Of course she knows we ain't got no finished drawing-room.

JARS. You get a vase; and I'll get some water [MRS. JARS *starts to run upstairs.*] There's no vase upstairs!

MRS. JARS. [*Halfway up, stops and comes back.*] Oh, ain't they!

JARS. There's one here in the pantry. [*He*

goes out Right.] I fixed it for some flowers I was going to get.

[*Reënters with vase, and they arrange the flowers.*

MRS. JARS. Did you! You thoughtful duckie, you.

JARS. Where's your pretty pink bow, Mrs. Jars?

MRS. JARS. Sure the young lady'll arrive all in crape, and the whole house'll have to wear black for a time to be in sympathy with her sorrer. Ain't she lost her uncle?

JARS. Little he cared for her. One letter a month and a cheque at Christmas.

MRS. JARS. It ill becomes us all the same who was remembered in his last will and testament not to sympathize with her grief. When she enters, she'll bust into a flood o' tears, I tell you,

and say, "Oh, my poor uncle!" Like as not she won't remember us at all.

JARS. Or know us if she did, probably bein' full of foreign airs.

MRS. JARS. Then she'll not be the child I remember, who's cried her heart out many a time on my bussom. I've kept *his own* bedroom for her exactly as he left it when he died!

JARS. What!!!

MRS. JARS. It'll be like a piece of her uncle to her.

JARS. Yes, and a pretty big piece too, I reckon. Is that why you've kept that door locked?

MRS. JARS. It is. I wouldn't have a thing touched!

JARS. Mrs. Jars, you're out of your mind, your innocent baby mind! Have you unlocked the door now?

MRS. JARS. Of course!

JARS. [*Sternly.*] Then go upstairs *and lock it*. [*She looks at him, astonished, without moving.*] Quick! [*She hurries up the stairs, but halfway up he stops her. He is a little excited.*] Mrs. Jars, come down, I hear wheels!

MRS. JARS. Mercy, they're coming! [*She hurries back in great excitement. They take their positions side by side in the centre and are both very excited.*] Calm yourself, Mr. Jars.

JARS. [*Drawing himself up stiffly.*] Me!!

MRS. JARS. And have a mournful look on. Remember her coming back's *a sorrer* to her!

JARS. I can't make no pretence of what I don't feel!

MRS. JARS. Yes, you can, appearences is easy. [*Taking out a deep black-bordered handkerchief,*

she holds it conspicuously in her folded hands, on her capacious front.

JARS. Our lamented former master — thank God, he's gone — was *not* a *nice* man, Mrs. Jars.

MRS. JARS. Don't think of that; think of the thousand dollars he left us!

[*The electric bell rings violently, and some one raps rapidly and continuously on the glass of the front door.*

JARS. Here she is! Now be dignified, Mrs. Jars.

MRS. JARS. [*On the verge of tears.*] I'm ready, — but if she's like her dear mother, Jars, I'll — I'll — go all to pieces!

[JARS *has gone to the door. He opens it.* GERALDINE *stands there with* FRÄULEIN *a little behind her.* GERALDINE *wears a brilliant scarlet dress with a white rose in her belt.* FRÄULEIN *is also dressed in colours.*

They carry hand luggage, and behind them are two cab drivers, with more luggage.

GERALDINE. Is this Mr. — yes — I'm sure you're William Jars, aren't you?

[*Coming toward him.*

JARS. Yes, miss.

[*Bowing.*

GERALDINE. Ah! You see! I've remembered all these years! How do you do, Jars?

[*Shakes his hand.*

[FRÄULEIN *follows her in.*

JARS. Very well, thank you, miss.

DRIVER. Shall we bring down the luggage?

GERALDINE. Yes, please. [JARS *half closes the door.* GERALDINE, *suddenly seeing* MRS. JARS, *cries out with delight.*] And there's Mrs. Jars! Dear old Mrs. Jars! [*Kissing her.*] Just the same! Oh, I've *never* forgotten you, and you haven't

lost a single pound, have you! I'm sure your lap is just as comfortable as ever it was, and your bosom just as comforting! Eh!

MRS. JARS. [*In tears.*] Oh, I'm sure, Miss Geraldine, you overcome me! Think of remembering o' me all these years — and you so like your mother! [*Crying, she breaks down, and speaks through her sobs.*] There, I told you, Jars, if she was like her mother, — and she's the living image, — I'd go all to pieces!

[*She runs out Right, ashamed of her exhibition of feeling.*

GERALDINE. Dear old soul! [*She turns to her companion and puts her arm about her.*] Ah! Fräulein, this is a *real welcome home*, isn't it? — and to be told that I'm really like my mother!

FRÄULEIN. [*Enthusiastically.*] It vas indeed *goot!!*

GERALDINE. But I forgot; *you* don't know Jars, do you — the butler here ever since I was a baby? This is my friend, Fräulein Handt, who lives with me.

JARS. I welcome you, too, Miss Fräulein, if you will excuse me.

FRÄULEIN. I tank you!

GERALDINE. I've told you about Jars and Mrs. Jars often! Oh, what lovely roses!

JARS. They was sent by Mrs. Wrighton, miss.

GERALDINE. How *dear* of her! [*To* FRÄULEIN.] Her older sister was mamma's most intimate friend. It was her husband who met us.

FRÄULEIN. Yes, I 'ave heard *my* aunt spoke of them. It vas one very happy marriage; they haf never got yet ben out their honeymoon.

GERALDINE. That's the kind of marriage *I* intend to make!

FRÄULEIN. I hope.

[*Patting her affectionately.*

[MRS. JARS *returns, wearing a big bright pink silk bow at her throat, and carrying a red embroidered handkerchief.*

MRS. JARS. Excuse me, miss, for givin' way.

GERALDINE. Of course! That made it a real home-coming for me. And I want you and Fräulein Handt to know each other, — Fräulein has brought me over.

MRS. JARS. [*With a courtesy.*] Pleased to make your acquaintance, miss.

FRÄULEIN. I tank you.

[JARS *goes out Right.*

GERALDINE. And look at the pretty pink bow she's put on!! Mrs. Jars, you're a coquette!

MRS. JARS. [*Confused.*] Oh, no, please, miss, I wear it to please Jars; but I put on black

to-day, thinking you might be arriving in mourning.

GERALDINE. Mourning for Uncle Ray! Whatever I am, I'm not a hypocrite! Mourning for that naughty old creature who couldn't bear me, who wouldn't have me even in the same country with him, and sent me off to that stupid hole where the childhood and girlhood were all studied out of me! No! I never *wore red* before in my life! But when I heard that precious old uncle of mine was finished, I went out that very day and bought this dress!

DRIVER. [*Pushing open door, his arms full.*] If you please, ma'am, the baggage is all down now. Shall we bring it?

MRS. JARS. Yes, of course!

[*The* MEN *bring in many trunks of all sizes, bandboxes, boxes, handbags, shawl straps, and steamer chairs, until the stage is actually full,*

with, in some instances, trunks and bags on top of one another. Meanwhile the following dialogue takes place.

GERALDINE. [*Referring to the luggage that begins to come in.*] I've brought with me everything I've ever owned!

MRS. JARS. Would you like to go to your room?

GERALDINE. I think I'll wait till the luggage is in.

MRS. JARS. I'm sorry to say Mr. Lang never finished this room down here. There isn't even a chair in it.

[*Opening door Left.*

GERALDINE. [*Looking in.*] Ugh! It looks like the ghost of a room, doesn't it?

MRS. JARS. Mr. Lang never entertained company, except in the dining room, and that room

and the hall was all he had furnished downstairs. [*Front bell rings. She goes to the door Left.*] Yes, ma'am, she's come! Yes, ma'am. I think you'd better let them get in first or they'll ruin that elegant dress. [*Turns to* GERALDINE.] It's Mrs. Wrighton!

[*The* TWO MEN *pass in with a big trunk and a little steamer one on top of it.*

GERALDINE. Oh, Fräulein, do you think she'll like me? — and only think she knew my mother, too.

[*The* TWO MEN, *having deposited their trunks, stand to one side.*

MRS. JARS. Come in, ma'am.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Outside, looking at the two men.*] It's lucky the young lady hadn't to pay duty! [*She enters.*] Where is —? [*Looking about her.* GERALDINE *stands expectant, breathless.*

MRS. WRIGHTON *sees her and starts.*] My *dear* child! [*They go quickly toward each other with outstretched hands.* MRS. JARS *goes out the front door.* MRS. WRIGHTON *is a charming woman of distinction, about forty-five years of age, and looking naturally younger; very smartly dressed, without any appearance of an effort to that end. She is perhaps more sentimental than one has the right to expect in a woman of the world, but that's forgivable; she means it, and it makes her happy.*] I would know you anywhere! [*She holds* GERALDINE'S *hand tight and affectionately and gazes into her face.*] The living image! The living image of your mother!

GERALDINE. [*Her throat and eyes filling.*] Oh, will you kiss me? I'm so glad to be *home!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Taking her in her arms.*] My dear child! [*Kisses her.*] I love you already!

You're overexcited! You'll be laughing in a minute. Is this Fräulein Handt?

GERALDINE. [*Controlling her tears.*] Oh, yes, excuse me. My dear *good old* friend and my dear *good new* friend!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* FRÄULEIN, *shaking hands.*] I'm very glad indeed to know you. When I was Miss Geraldine's age I knew your aunt very well.

FRÄULEIN. I tank you!

GERALDINE. Would you mind sitting down here somewhere till the luggage is in?

MRS. WRIGHTON. By all means. These trunks are perfectly comfortable. [*They sit on a large trunk, side by side,* FRÄULEIN *standing by the door and directing the bringing in of their luggage.*] And now, Geraldine — I shall call you Geraldine?

GERALDINE. Of course.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Your mother did me a service I can never forget when I was a girl your age. I want to ask you to let me be a *second* mother to you, may I? A sort of *well-meaning stepmother!* [*Laughing.*] And to Fräulein, too!

GERALDINE. How good of you! How good of you!

FRÄULEIN. Miss Geraldine, why vill you not make haste go to your room for one leettle minute, refresh yourself mit a leettle vater? I vill vatch out for de luggages.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes, do, and take off your hat and make yourself comfortable.

[MRS. JARS *returns.*

GERALDINE. [*Rising.*] Mrs. Jars, will you show me my room, please?

MRS. JARS. Certainly! [*Climbing over a trunk which blocks her passage.*] And I forgot to tell

you, Miss Geraldine, that I've kep your uncle's room sacred, just as he left it, no one has been in it, till *you* go.

[*Going upstairs.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* FRÄULEIN.] Well! [*With a long breath, laughingly.*] That's a *pretty large order*, I should imagine, for a young girl!

GERALDINE. [*Stops on stairs to speak to* MRS. WRIGHTON.] Mrs. Wrighton.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Nothing of the sort! Call me Aunt Janet.

GERALDINE. [*Delighted.*] Aunt Janet! Won't you come with me and see my room?

[MRS. WRIGHTON *half rises to go, but* FRÄULEIN, *with a gesture and a serious, appealing look, stops her.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. No, dear, I'll wait here with Fräulein.

GERALDINE. Very well. I won't be long, *Aunt* Janet.

[*As she goes on upstairs,* FRÄULEIN *whispers to* MRS. WRIGHTON.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Geraldine?

GERALDINE. Yes?

[MRS. JARS *disappears upstairs.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Throw me that *white rose,* it's lovely.

GERALDINE. Oh! [*Putting her hand over it.*] I'm so sorry, but I *couldn't.* [*She goes on, but stops at top to call over the railing.*] Fräulein!!! [*Laughing.*] Oh, you are *a tattle tale!!* ——

[*She follows after* MRS. JARS.

[*The following conversation is interrupted several times by the* MEN *bringing in trunks. The* TWO WOMEN *always break off the conversation, even in the middle of a word, when the* MEN

enter, and continue exactly where they left off when the MEN *exit.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Why?

[*Interrupted.*

FRÄULEIN. [*Interrupting.*] Exguse me! There vas so leettle time. I hafe gave my sacred vord I vill not tell her, ant I vas afraid it means I vill tell nobody, but I must tell yust you, for I may haf wrong done, and I cannot haf dat responsiblity by mineself.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Of what?

FRÄULEIN. The white rose vas gif her, as one efery day, by a young Hungarian gentleman who hafe followed Mees Geraldine here from Budapesth.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Smiling.*] Well, I think he showed very good taste!

FRÄULEIN. But I tink already she is in loaf with him!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh! *Already!* Still, you say he is a gentleman?

FRÄULEIN. He behafe so, — only — he has no money — not at all!

MRS. WRIGHTON. That's not *unusual* with foreigners — I suppose he has a *title?*

FRÄULEIN. *Dat* is vat I have swore I vill not tell.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But —

FRÄULEIN. I recognize him, pecause I hafe saw him in London, to der ambassador's, his unglevere I vas de governess unt he vas der secretary. But he call himself Mr. Carlman. Now, nobody must know vas iss his true name.

MRS. WRIGHTON. That doesn't sound quite right.

FRÄULEIN. To me neither, aber he haf for himself reasons. He is a *Kinsey* — a *Count Kinsey.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. The name sounds familiar.

FRÄULEIN. Mees Geraldine do not know. But I hafe feel I must tell you, pecause you are a voman of der vorld unt can look out for her besser as I can! If he is not a goot man — I hafe heard me some tings . . .

MRS. WRIGHTON. Wait a minute — Kinsey — of course — it was all in the *Herald* last week — a Count Kinsey who had some disgraceful scandal in London, and had sailed for New York under an assumed name. This looks very serious. You think she is really interested in him?

FRÄULEIN. Oh, yes!

MRS. WRIGHTON. We must make inquiries at once about it.

FRÄULEIN. He vas in de Austrio-Hungary embassy in London some five — six years ago. You might find out someting through London.

Ach, Himmel, I feel so relieved I hafe tell it all!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Don't you worry! Maybe the man has only sown a few wild oats — and meanwhile — anyway, to be on the safe side we'll distract Geraldine, and I'll meet Mr. —

FRÄULEIN. Carlman.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But he owned up to you he *was Count Kinsey?*

FRÄULEIN. He had to! I *recognize* him, and den he made me promise I vould not tell —

MRS. WRIGHTON. And he hasn't a penny —

FRÄULEIN. Nutting, but —

[*Interrupted.*

[*As* GERALDINE *appears on the landing above.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Sh!

[*Seeing* GERALDINE.

GERALDINE. [*Who is laughing, with one hand*

behind her back.] My dear friends, I don't want to be unfeeling, but I went in for one second to Uncle Ray's bedroom, *kept sacred for my eyes* — and what do you think was the first thing I saw on *his dressing-table?*

MRS. WRIGHTON. What?

GERALDINE. One pink satin lady's slipper!

[*Showing it.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. My dear, I hope you were discreet!

GERALDINE. I was! I looked no farther! [*She comes down a few steps, then stops and eyes them suspiciously.*] You two've been talking about me!

MRS. WRIGHTON. We couldn't have a better topic!

[*The* DRIVERS *enter with the last luggage. The floor of the hall is literally covered, the small*

luggage being on top of the big. MRS. WRIGHTON *and* FRÄULEIN *have been driven to the tops of two large "Saratogas."*

GERALDINE. But surely you're going to take it upstairs? You aren't going to leave it here?

DRIVER. We've done all we can. We got other luggage to deliver.

GERALDINE. But —

[*Interrupted.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Interrupting.*] Never mind. Jars will find some men to move them.

GERALDINE. Very well. Will you pass that on, please? [*She laughs, giving some money to* MRS. WRIGHTON, *who passes it on to* FRÄULEIN, *who gives it to the* MEN. *This is because the trunks make it impossible to move about. When the money reaches the* MEN.] Thank you!

DRIVER. Thank you, miss.

[*They go out Left.*

GERALDINE. [*Sitting on the stairs, halfway down.*] Fräulein told you about my mysterious friend of the white roses?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes, and I want very much to meet him.

GERALDINE. Ah! That is good of you. He's really charming. But he's like Lohengrin, — he won't tell who he really is.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But a *swan* didn't draw *his* boat over!

GERALDINE. No, thank goodness! *Twin screws*, even, were too slow for me!

[*The front door-bell rings.*

GERALDINE. Perhaps that's he!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You *didn't* ask him to call *to-day?*

GERALDINE. [*She hesitates a little in this speech.*] No, I didn't *ask* him, but I gave him my address, and told him to come any time he *liked* and let me know where he would be. I thought that as I was an American, it was only being decently hospitable to a foreigner in my home.

MRS. WRIGHTON. That's a little *thin*, my dear, considering how long you've been in this country.

[MRS. JARS *comes in Left to answer the bell, but there is no passage for her except over the luggage.*

MRS. JARS. The land sakes!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You'll have to *climb*, Mrs. Jars!

MRS. JARS. This is worse than the streets getting ready for the underground railroad.

[*Climbing over the trunks.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Tell Jars, when you go back,

to send over to Third Avenue for some men to move them!

FRÄULEIN. I tink when you vill excuse me I vill go now up to my room.

[*She climbs toward the staircase. She and* MRS. JARS *help each other, holding hands while they cross.*

[*The bell rings again.*

GERALDINE. [*Rising, with a little suppressed excitement.*] Mrs. Jars, if it should be a foreign gentleman who can't speak English, tell him we're at home.

MRS. WRIGHTON. We couldn't escape very well, even if we wanted to. And I can't go till my husband comes for me. He promised to, and I've never disappointed him in my life.

[MRS. JARS *opens the door.* VI *and* LORD TILBURY *are outside.*

VI. Is Miss Lang at home?

GERALDINE. Oh, Miss Tompson, do come in, and Lord Tilbury, I'm delighted!

[*She runs down the steps, but is herself stopped there by the trunks.* VI *and* TILBURY *come into the hall, saying gayly,* "How do you do!" *but they, too, are stopped by the trunks.*

GERALDINE. I'm so sorry. Isn't it awful; the men wouldn't carry them up!

MRS. JARS. [*In the front doorway.*] Excuse me, miss, I will go out and come in by the basement door. Would you care for tea, miss?

GERALDINE. Oh, yes, please!

MRS. JARS. Yes, miss.

[*She goes out the front door.*

VI. Come along, Lord Tilbury, who's afraid?

[*She takes his hand and jumps up on one trunk and then pulls him up after her.*

TILBURY. Thanks awfully!

VI. Talk about Switzerland!

GERALDINE. Aunt Janet, I want to present Miss Tompson, one of my steamer friends.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Pleasantly.*] Delighted.

GERALDINE. My aunt, Mrs. Wrighton.

VI. How do you do.

GERALDINE. And Lord Tilbury—Mrs. Wrighton.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Charmed!

TILBURY. [*In bowing, the trunk he is on tips, and losing his balance, he almost falls.*] I beg your pardon!

GERALDINE. Do sit down and be safe. You'll find hat boxes and things.

[*Sitting herself again.*

[*They all sit in a group.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. How do you like America, Lord Tilbury?

TILBURY. Oh, I think it's rippin'!

VI. He doesn't know anything about it, but I'm going to show him. I made him come up here in a cable car, and he's never been out of a cab before in his life!

GERALDINE. How did you like the cable car, Lord Tilbury?

TILBURY. Oh, I thought it was rippin'!

VI. And he's got to go back in the *elevated!* — I came to tell you where we're stopping. I couldn't find you anywhere this morning. Did you have a bad time at the customs? Oh, my dear, we had it *perfectly* awful!! *Perfectly awful!!!* They wanted to arrest mamma for a dressmaker — said no private woman would be bringing in so many dresses, and that they must be models! I don't know what people think society in Butte City is like! They'd better come out and see.

GERALDINE. But *what* DID you do?

VI. Well, the first thing we did was for popper to make everything worse, by shouting out, "Where in —— did all these dresses come from, anyway! I never saw any of them before!"

[MRS. WRIGHTON *and* GERALDINE *exchange an amused glance.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Just like a man!

GERALDINE. I hope your mother came out all right?

VI. Oh, yes, popper fixed it up somehow, but mamma naturally had hysterics, which was most fortunate in the end, because that's why we're here at all.

[MRS. JARS *brings in the tea-tray from Right.*

GERALDINE. Really!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Here's the tea!

VI. I'll tell you when we get the tea.

[*Poor* MRS. JARS, *behind a large trunk, with the big silver tray, looks hopeless.*

MRS. JARS. Please, miss, I shall never be able to climb up with this —

[*Interrupted.*

GERALDINE. Of course not! Lord Tilbury, would you please go over and relieve Mrs. Jars?

TILBURY. With pleasure!

[*Going very carefully.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Do you want any help?

TILBURY. Oh, no, thanks, it's jolly, we're all right now.

[*He takes the tray.*

VI. Don't drop it!

TILBURY. Rather not. [*He comes very slowly. He stops.*] It's very odd — I seem to feel the motion of the boat.

[*All watch with suspense.*

GERALDINE. That's awful!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Lots of people do, you know, afterward.

TILBURY. I wasn't sick a little bit on board, but —

[*One foot slips between two trunks and down he falls, and over go the tea-tray, cups, etc. Every one cries out.*

GERALDINE. [*Rising.*] I *hope* you're not *hurt!*

TILBURY. [*Climbing up.*] Not at all, thank you, but I say I *am* sorry for being such a duffer! The tea's quite gone.

VI. I didn't want any, I've just had some.

MRS. JARS. I can soon make some more, miss.

GERALDINE. Do. [TILBURY *is leaning over, picking up the débris.*] Don't bother, Lord Tilbury,

please; Mrs. Jars can do without them—can't you?

MRS. JARS. Oh, yes, miss.

[*She goes out Right.*

VI. [*Yawning violently.*] Everybody please excuse me, but I haven't slept a wink all night, and thereby hangs my tale as to our present address, which I've come to give you.

[*They all struggle with yawns as they watch her, even* MRS. JARS, *who is leaving them.*

GERALDINE. *Do* tell us!

VI. You see, yesterday, our last day out, mamma and popper fought like sixty over where we were to stay here. Popper said we were going to the Fifth Avenue Hotel and mamma said we were going to the Waldorf-Astoria. Popper said he wouldn't stay a *day* in that damn-fool hostelry, and mamma said she wouldn't stay a *minute* in

the Fifth Avenue. I saw myself taking the *through train straight* to Butte City! So I joined in and said I wouldn't be found dead in the Fifth Avenue Hotel — and then we had it hot and heavy! We all held out, too, and mamma wouldn't have popper in her stateroom, so I had to give up my comfortable room by myself to him and go to sleep with her in the upstairs bunk. It just spoiled my night's rest. I've been terribly dull all morning, haven't I, Lord Tilbury?

TILBURY. I beg your pardon?

VI. [*Laughing.*] Oh, isn't he awful! *Just awful!* He never follows you through a whole speech! Gets stuck somewhere in the middle — then expects you to go all over it again! It's like talking to a deaf person. I say, haven't I been too stupid all morning?

TILBURY. By George, no, you've been rippin'!

GERALDINE. There, Vi! There's good for evil for you.

VI. And for a reward I'll let him go home in a cab!

MRS. WRIGHTON. But you haven't told us where you are yet!

VI. Oh, yes. Well, when mamma had hysterics in the Custom House, of course that settled popper, and *we're at the Waldorf-Astoria*, and — what's more — mamma and I have got a plan to stay a month. There'd be no use going before next week, anyway, because *everybody* comes on to the *Waldorf* from *Butte City* for the *Horse Show*.

GERALDINE. I'm delighted you are going to stay. We must see much of each other.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And I hope Geraldine will bring you to see me. And I shall be very glad to have you call, too, Lord Tilbury.

[TILBURY *and* VI *both say, "Thank you."*

VI. [*To* LORD TILBURY.] You might just step out and see if there's a cab anywhere around.

[TILBURY *makes his way gingerly toward door Left.*

GERALDINE. I'm sorry there is no servant to send, but Jars has gone out.

TILBURY. Oh, I shall manage all right, thank you.

VI. I hope you'll manage better than you did with the tea! Don't *spill the cab*, especially if *you're* in it! [*He laughs, embarrassed, and goes out Left.*] Isn't he sweet! Oh, I think he's just *too sweet* for anything! My!

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] You've quite cut me out!

VI. Not at all. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] I saw her the last two evenings with another foreigner.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Really!

[*With a quizzing glance at* GERALDINE.

VI. [*To* GERALDINE.] What is he? I suppose a *duke*, as you gave up a *lord* for him!

GERALDINE. Not at all, he's a plain "Mister."

VI. Aren't you *funny!*

GERALDINE. And what about the Doctor, please? [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] She WAS *mad* about the Doctor.

VI. He's coming to luncheon to-morrow! I'm just dying to see him in his store clothes, without brass buttons, — I'm *just dying!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* VI.] You must be prepared for a slight disappointment.

VI. [*Laughing.*] Oh, well, I've still got Lord Tilbury!!

[*Bell rings.*

GERALDINE. That's he, I'll let him in. [*Makes her way to door and opens it.*] Come in.

TILBURY. I have the cab.

VI. All right, but *to-morrow* you'll *have* to ride on the *elevated.*

[*She rises.*

GERALDINE. Won't you wait for the tea?

VI. No, I must go, I only came to tell you our address. Good-by. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] I should *love* to come and see you.

MRS. WRIGHTON. It will give me much pleasure.

VI. [*To* GERALDINE, *kissing her.*] *Only* a "*Mister!*" I don't believe you!

[*She goes out.*

[TILBURY *has bowed good-by to* MRS. WRIGHTON *and goes to* GERALDINE *as* VI *leaves.*

GERALDINE. How's Rosy?

TILBURY. I say! have you noticed how very *remarkably* like Rosy Miss Tompson is?!

GERALDINE. [*Laughs.*] O dear me! But you know I don't remember Miss Boggs!

TILBURY. It's a pity, she's rippin'!

VI. [*Calls from outside.*] Come along!

GERALDINE. Good-by! You're going to have a very good time here! You'll find New York *full* of Rosys! Come and see me!

TILBURY. With pleasure!

[*He bows and goes out.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. My dear, what an amusing young couple!

GERALDINE. And I believe I've made a match!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You know, my child, you're rather young to be making matches; there's a responsibility about it better suited to us older women!—even for yourself. Remember, you said I might be your second mother.

GERALDINE. You're worrying about Mr. Carl-

man, and before you've met him. Wait! You won't be able to resist him.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Mercy on us, I *hope* I *will* be! I'm a most happy married woman!

GERALDINE. [*Laughing.*] You know what I mean!

MRS. WRIGHTON. I know one thing you mean, and that is, young lady, to have your own way in this world when once you've made up your mind it's the right way! Do I read you wrong?

GERALDINE. No. Bravo! I was considered the stubbornest little girl in the whole English colony at Stuttgart.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But you are open to persuasion if your way should be wrong?

GERALDINE. Yes, if it were *proved* to be wrong!

[*The front door-bell rings twice*

GERALDINE. Perhaps that's he!

MRS. WRIGHTON. I know it is; he always rings twice!

GERALDINE. Who?

MRS. WRIGHTON. My husband.

GERALDINE. Oh, I meant —

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Interrupting.*] I know *you* did; but *I didn't.*

[*Smiling.*

[MRS. JARS *enters Right.*

MRS. JARS. [*In distress.*] Here's the tea, miss, but I don't see how I can, and Jars isn't back yet.

[*She places the tray on a trunk.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. That's all right, Mrs. Jars. [*To* GERALDINE.] Let me open it, I know it's Dick.

MRS. JARS. Thank you, ma'am.

[*She goes out Right.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*As she climbs.*] I'm glad your Hungarian hasn't come yet. This is when I am not so sure of my grace and agility as I am of my age! Dick will get some men to come in if Jars can't find any. [*Opens door.*] Come in, darling!

[WRIGHTON *enters from left. He is a good-looking man of fifty; a man of the world and of business, with nothing unusual about him.*

WRIGHTON. Halloo! Here all right, are you?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* GERALDINE.] Excuse me! [*Kisses him.*] I haven't seen him since this morning when he went down to meet you!

GERALDINE. I don't know what we would have done without him. Do sit down.

[*Laughing.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. The express men wouldn't carry up the luggage!

WRIGHTON. I'll go get some men.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Not yet. Jars is out looking.

GERALDINE. [*Moving over gingerly to the tea things.*] Have some tea?

WRIGHTON. Not for me, thank you.

MRS. WRIGHTON. I will! I find that the air up here on Cathedral Heights has made me hungry.

WRIGHTON. I'm sorry to say I've come to bother Fräulein Handt.

GERALDINE. Oh, I'll call her. [*She gives* MRS. WRIGHTON *her tea and goes upstairs. She stops on the landing.*] These lovely roses, I *know* YOU sent them!

[*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.

MRS. WRIGHTON. If I'd known better, I'd have sent *white* ones!

GERALDINE. [*Smiling, happy.*] Oh!— Sh!!—

[*She goes up the stairs and out Right.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Isn't she a perfect dear!

WRIGHTON. She is a charming girl! And now, for Heaven's sake, Janet, don't move heaven and earth to marry her off for a year or two yet!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You don't know her; she's begun to move both those places herself! I'll explain later when there's plenty of time. But tell me, am I right in thinking the name Count Kinsey familiar to me?

WRIGHTON. I'm sure I don't know.

MRS. WRIGHTON. In the *Herald* last week?

WRIGHTON. [*A second's pause.*] Oh, yes, I remember now. They were talking about it in the club, — he's come over here incog. Kinsey

was the fellow who broke Hayward's sister's heart. Don't you remember the scandal several years ago in London? He was secretary to the Austrian Embassy. The girl killed herself, and he was dismissed from the service.

MRS. WRIGHTON. It's the same man! It *must* be the *same!*

WRIGHTON. Who?

MRS. WRIGHTON. A *Hungarian* who was on the boat under an *assumed name*, but whom Fräulein recognized as *Count Kinsey*, and in whom Geraldine is already very interested!

WRIGHTON. Oh, there's more than *one* Kinsey in Hungary.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But the assumed name?

WRIGHTON. [*More thoughtfully.*] Yes, — bad.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And this one WAS *secretary* in the Austro-Hungarian Embassy. Fräulein

was governess there; that's where she knew him!

WRIGHTON. Oh! then it's serious, and we'd better look into it.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But the girl's very stubborn, and is on the defensive. We must be — careful. She expects him here to-day. [GERALDINE *and* FRÄULEIN *appear on landing and come downstairs.* MRS. WRIGHTON *finishes very sotto voce.*] I'm going to stay on till he arrives, and be as charming as possible, to disarm him, and her.

GERALDINE. [*Coming down the stairs.*] You are talking about me or making love!

MRS. WRIGHTON. When I talk to my husband about anybody or anything, I always make love to him, I can't help it.

[*With an affectionate look at him*

WRIGHTON. *Fräulein,* — your dog!

FRÄULEIN. [*Horrified.*] Mein Gott!! I forgot her! My leettle Wilhelm!

GERALDINE. Her "*little Wilhelm*" is a fat old Dachshund named after the Emperor, whom Fräulein adores.

WRIGHTON. You'll have to go back with me; the custom officers wouldn't let me take him.

FRÄULEIN. Oh, my poor little Villie! I vas ready!

MRS. WRIGHTON. I'll join you at home, dear, — I may leave here soon, and maybe not for some time.

WRIGHTON. Very well!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To the others.*] You'll excuse me! [*Kisses him.*] You see I mayn't be home for hours yet!

WRIGHTON. You wouldn't think we'd been married sixteen years, would you?

GERALDINE. Yes, I would! That's what I call being married!

WRIGHTON. [*Opens front door and half bows.*] Fräulein!

[FRÄULEIN *passes out, and* WRIGHTON *is about to follow, but stops, saying to* KINSEY *outside,* "Excuse me!" *He then turns inside and speaks to* GERALDINE.

A gentleman, Miss Lang. [*To* KINSEY, *who has spoken.*] I beg your pardon!

[GERALDINE *has risen excitedly and holds* MRS. WRIGHTON'S *hand.*

GERALDINE. It's he — Oh, I *want* you to like him.

WRIGHTON. [*Turning to* GERALDINE.] Mr. Carlman.

GERALDINE. Please ask him to come in.

WRIGHTON. Won't you come in?

[*As* KINSEY *enters Left,* WRIGHTON *goes out Left and closes the door behind him.*

GERALDINE. *So* glad to see you, and I want to present you to Mrs. Wrighton — Herr Carlman.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Herr Carlman.

[*Bowing very pleasantly.*

KINSEY. [*Embarrassed, bows stiffly.*] Enchanté de faire votre connaissance, madame.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Bows charmingly, then to* GERALDINE.] Horrors! doesn't he speak English?

KINSEY. [*Laughs.*] I beg your pardon. I vas one minute — [*He hesitates.*] — I tink ze word — embrassed! — ? —

MRS. WRIGHTON. I speak French so shockingly!

GERALDINE. Can you climb?

KINSEY. Oh, yess!

[*He jumps up on the trunks*

GERALDINE. Have you settled your rooms?

KINSEY. Yess, it iss not much — [*He hesitates, hunting for the word.*] — fashion*a*ble — but it is among with my countrymen in ze University place!

MRS. WRIGHTON. And how do you like America?

KINSEY. [*Laughing.*] I do not know now yet!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Laughing.*] There's an *honest* answer!

KINSEY. But I do like, oh! very much, ze Americans!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You have known many?

KINSEY. Oh, yess! in London, in Paris, in Vienna, ant also in Budapesth.

GERALDINE. Will you have some tea?

KINSEY. No, I tank you.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And I'm afraid I must go.

GERALDINE. No! Don't!

KINSEY. I hope I 'afe not frighten you off avay!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, no! It takes more than

one charming *foreigner* to *frighten an* AMERICAN *woman!*

KINSEY. [*Bows.*] Madame! You are so quick ant so clever, also I am so stupid I cannot back reply make, I can only *very much* — I tink ze word — ADMIRE!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Thank you, a charming word! Will you lunch with me to-morrow, Sunday, at two? And, Geraldine, you'll come, it's *for* YOU. I'm having the lunch on a *Sunday* so as to have plenty of *real men!*

GERALDINE. Of course I will come.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And you Count — Mr. Carlman?

[KINSEY *has started violently.*

GERALDINE. [*Curiously.*] Count?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Laughing nervously.*] Oh — I always call all foreigners Count, a silly habit, but

there are so many of you all, you know! You'll come to lunch, won't you, Mr. Carlman?

KINSEY. [*Relieved.*] I vill be most delight.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Good-by.

[*To* GERALDINE.

[KINSEY *goes to door to open for her.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Aside to* GERALDINE.] He's perfectly charming. I'm going to give him one of your red roses for his button-hole.

GERALDINE. [*Laughing.*] You FLIRT!!—

MRS. WRIGHTON. Good-by. [*Takes a red rose and goes to doorway.*] You must let me welcome you to America with a native rose!—for your button-hole.

[*Putting it in his coat.*

GERALDINE. *I* prefer white!

KINSEY. Madame, I tank you for ze rose ant ze welcome; *bose* I vill keep by me always.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Who wants* KINSEY *to leave at the same time.*] Can I drop you anywhere?

KINSEY. [*Astonished, not understanding.*] DROP me?!!

GERALDINE. [*Laughing.*] She means her brougham is at the door, and she will leave you where you want to go.

KINSEY. Oh! I tank you, but I have one few words to speak wiz Meess Lang, if she vill allow me!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Sorry! Good-by.

[*At door.*

GERALDINE. Good-by. [MRS. WRIGHTON *goes.* KINSEY *bows very low and shuts the door. To* KINSEY.] Isn't she a darling woman!

KINSEY. She iss, and hafe decided me! I make me one American citizen just so soon as ze President permit. I nefer go back.

GERALDINE. Hurrah!

KINSEY. I hafe by me one very good idea! I already talk it over wiz a gentleman in ze boat. I vill me get up a company ant put mine vines — Hungarian vines — on ze market in New York. Zey are not sufficient known here, it vill be great successful wit *much* money.

GERALDINE. And much money is *very* convenient! —

KINSEY. Oh, very. It means — entire — everyting to me.

GERALDINE. No, don't say that.

KINSEY. I do not mean it bad! [*He sighs.*] I 'afe come to say how you do an' good-by.

GERALDINE. You are going to leave New York?

KINSEY. No! I stay me in ze New York. It iss here I must form ze company, to whom I vill

— how zey say it? — farm out all ze vineyards of mine home. I take me so many shares, zey take zem so many. Oh, it iss a *very* good plan, because now all ze grape all go to ze bad, an' ze vine, ve do not know vat to do viz it! There iss so much grape at my home!

GERALDINE. Well, it seems to me everything is very flourishing, and I'm ever so glad!

KINSEY. Yess! — but— only — [*Plaintively.*] I must stay me avay from here.

GERALDINE. Why? I don't see why?

KINSEY. No? And I cannot *try* to make explanation.

GERALDINE. Why not?

KINSEY. I cannot. Oh! [*Angry.*] ze word! — 'afe — *confidence?* — in myself.

GERALDINE. But you didn't talk to me like this on the boat!

KINSEY. I know it — I did not altogezer know zen how much — vhat —

[*He hesitates.*

GERALDINE. *What?*

KINSEY. If you look so at me like zat much longer, I break me my svear.

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] What swear?

KINSEY. I cannot help myself, I vill break him!

GERALDINE. Yes, DO! *Break him!*

KINSEY. I am sure I am —

[*He hesitates.*

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] You think the word!

KINSEY. [*Smiling.*] Yes, tank you, — a *blackguard!*

GERALDINE. Oh, *think again!* *I* could do much better than that!

KINSEY. How do you say *ein blackguard?*

GERALDINE. That's right — blackguard, only it's *wrong!*

KINSEY. I vill myself explain. [*Speaks with great hesitation and difficulty.*] I 'afe swore zat I would not — zat I would not do someting because it vas not right I do it. It iss very wrong, because I cannot say it all, I cannot say enough.

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] Maybe *you* call this an *explanation,* but I assure you *I* don't understand a word!

KINSEY. I mean to say I vould not be honourable under ze — [*He thinks.*] — circumztances, to say it all! I can only say so much *I loaf you!*

[*She is startled, surprised at the sudden avowal. She looks up at him a moment in silence, then her eyes drop.*

GERALDINE. [*Very softly, tenderly, and yet with a half smile.*] Isn't that saying a *good deal?*

KINSEY. [*With real contrition.*] I 'afe broke me mine oath.

GERALDINE. [*Looking up at him seriously and sweetly.*] But if you really DO love me? . . .

KINSEY. [*Rising.*] Wiz all mine heart, wiz all mine life!

GERALDINE. Then why not tell me — when I am *glad* to hear it?

KINSEY. You *vas* GLAD?!

GERALDINE. *Very* glad.

KINSEY. [*Quickly taking her hand.*] *You* — you care for me now already, a leettle?! —

GERALDINE. [*Rises.*] I care for you now already — *very much.*

[*A second's pause.*

[KINSEY *seizes her hand and kisses it.*

In America that is not the custom! [*He looks in her eyes, and slowly draws her to*

him, takes her, willing, in his arms, and kisses her. She withdraws from his arms.] And now, why didn't you want to tell me you loved me, — I wore your roses every day, I gave you every minute of my time you asked for, and though I tried to lie with my eyes, I know the truth would out in them sometimes. I felt it burn and shut my lids.

KINSEY. [*With dignity, slowly but with desperation.*] I cannot ask you to be mine vife.

GERALDINE. [*Startled, drawing slightly away, in a faint voice.*] What?! . . .

KINSEY. Not for so long time, I do not know vhen. — Perhaps nefer!

GERALDINE. What do you mean?

KINSEY. And yet also you are all ze vorld to me; it iss not only ze words vhen I say I vould glad lie down mine life for you! I *loaf* you —

GERALDINE. But if you love me — why? Why can't you —

[*She hesitates.*

KINSEY. [*Searches for words to express himself.*] It would not be, — how do one say it? — not manly off me, — not — honour.

GERALDINE. Not honour?

KINSEY. I iss not free.

GERALDINE. Not free!

KINSEY. I speak ze English so badly, — I am — bind — bound by — vhat you call? — ze laws of honour —

[*Interrupted.*

GERALDINE. NOT to ask me to be your *wife?*

KINSEY. Yess, I *cannot!* Eferybody vill DESPISE me ven I did! —

GERALDINE. [*Quickly.*] Then how dared you tell me you loved me! How dared you allow me

to say — I — [*Louder.*] Oh, how dared you! how dared you!

KINSEY. I mean not to, I svore myself not to, — but I could not help it, I could not hold ze loaf back!

GERALDINE. [*Angry.*] I will *never* forgive you! I will *never* FORGIVE you!!

KINSEY. You tink me right now, vhen I have chose ze word *blackguard?*

GERALDINE. Yes! Good-by. There is your rose! [*Throwing it down.*] Dead! like everything else between you and me, Herr Carlman.

KINSEY. Vhen I vas free I vill come back wiz a fresh rose an' *ask* you to be *mine* VIFE.

GERALDINE. I will never forgive you!

KINSEY. Yes, pecause you loaf me, and I loaf you, and vhen I come honour*ab*le back, so your heart hafe remain true.

GERALDINE. I haven't any heart any longer.

[JARS *enters Left.*

JARS. Beg pardon, miss, the men are here to carry up the trunks.

GERALDINE. In a moment, Jars; the door, please. This gentleman is going.

[JARS *opens the front door.*

[KINSEY *looks at her reproachfully. A pause.*

GERALDINE. Good-by, Herr Carlman.

KINSEY. I vill me come back one day.

[*He bows and goes out.*

[JARS *shuts the door.*

GERALDINE. I am not at home if that gentleman calls again.

JARS. Yes, miss.

[*He goes out Right.*

[GERALDINE *has started slowly upstairs; she stops to watch* JARS, *and when he has gone she*

runs downstairs and picks up the white rose she threw away, glancing about to see that no one sees her.

GERALDINE. And to-day, too! To-day of all days, when I was so happy, and now—it's all gone! Everything!! EVERYTHING! Oh, why did I come back home!

[*She throws herself down on the stairs and sobs as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

A fortnight later, at the Wrightons'. A drawing-room panelled in rose du Barry brocade; only eighteenth-century engravings are on the wall, and the furniture is a suite, covered with Gobelin tapestry; there are some small marqueterie tables here and there. There is an opening at the back into a farther room, through which entrances and exits are made. There is also a double door Left, which leads to the hall. At Right is the fireplace, with sofa and chairs by it. MRS. WRIGHTON *is arranging a table for bridge whist at Left Centre.*

SERVANT. [*From Left, announces.*] Miss Lang.

[*Geraldine enters. She wears a white rose.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Greeting her affectionately.*] My dear child, I'm delighted. But you're awfully early, the class isn't for half an hour!

GERALDINE. [*Who is very serious.*] I've come to see you about something else.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Seeing the white rose, is not pleased.*] He has turned up again? Geraldine!

[*Remonstrating, and yet with sympathy and understanding.*

GERALDINE. [*Firmly, coming at once to the point.*] I want his address.

MRS. WRIGHTON. I don't know it.

GERALDINE. The letter of regrets he wrote you for Sunday's lunch had no address?

MRS. WRIGHTON. No, a most charming note in French, saying he regretted not being able to come, but found he must deny himself, for the

present, *all* society in America. Suspicious, my dear. Believe a wise old woman that you've had a narrow escape.

GERALDINE. I can't! I tell you I wasn't fair to him that afternoon; I ought to have kept still and let him explain more what he really meant. His English is bad, and he doesn't understand clearly. He may not have really meant what he said.

MRS. WRIGHTON. He said, I think you told me, he was "not free to ask you to be his wife"?

GERALDINE. [*Unwillingly.*] Yes. . . .

MRS. WRIGHTON. That he was honourably bound not to —

GERALDINE. Yes — but it may be some exaggerated notion of honour, — you know what foreigners are like, — or the words "not free" and "bound" he may have translated wrongly. I want to have

you see him, and give him a chance to explain. Would you do this for me, dear Aunt Janet?

MRS. WRIGHTON. What you ask is what I've been trying to do for the last day and a half, but neither Dick nor I can find the man!

GERALDINE. How *good* of you!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Not that I've much hope, dear. I might as well warn you.

GERALDINE. You know something about him which I don't, and which you haven't told me! I've seen it in your face.

MRS. WRIGHTON. I do — and I don't.

GERALDINE. What?

MRS. WRIGHTON. I can't tell, it isn't my secret. We're going to try and make him tell us himself.

[WRIGHTON *comes in quickly from Left with a certain glad excitement.*

WRIGHTON. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] My dear girl, I've found him.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Going to her husband.*] Geraldine, you'll excuse me! It's for your sake, it's for what he's done for you.

[*She kisses him.*

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] You *fraud!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* GERALDINE.] No! [*To* WRIGHTON.] It's Mr. Carlman you mean, isn't it?

GERALDINE. Mr. Carlman!

WRIGHTON. Yes!

GERALDINE. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] *I'd* like to kiss him, too!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Smilingly hesitates.*] Well, you may *this once*, but don't let it grow on you!

GERALDINE. Thank you!

[*Shaking hands with* WRIGHTON, *who kisses*

her humorously, with great dignity, on the cheek.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes — always like that!!

GERALDINE. [*To* WRIGHTON.] And having found him, we'll give him a chance to right himself, won't we? A fair chance!

WRIGHTON. If you want my honest opinion, I think he's a perfectly charming, unconscionable scamp; but we'll find out. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] He's coming to see you this afternoon.

GERALDINE. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] *Your* chance!

WRIGHTON. He's furious with me! Sit down a moment. [GERALDINE *sits, as does* WRIGHTON.] He actually came to my office.

MRS. WRIGHTON. He knew you were my husband?

[*Sitting.*

WRIGHTON. Not at all! He brought me a letter from Mathewson, about a wine company. He's forming a syndicate to put Hungarian wines on the market.

GERALDINE. He told me about it.

WRIGHTON. He's been clever; he's found exactly the right men to interest in the scheme, — and he *has* interested them. It seems they only need *me* now to complete the company!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Why especially *you?*

WRIGHTON. [*To* GERALDINE.] *My* business is the importation of French wines. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] If I am in the new company, they have the biggest French wine company as a *friendly rival* instead of an enemy.

GERALDINE. But why is he *angry* with you?

WRIGHTON. Well, in the first place, I told

him at once that I knew of him through my wife.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And embarrassed him a little.

WRIGHTON. And then I went it rather strong, perhaps, and said I had every reason to believe he wasn't what he appeared to be, and that I should *warn* my friends who were thinking of joining the company.

GERALDINE. Oh, Mr. Wrighton!

WRIGHTON. My dear girl — [*Rises.*] — he hasn't a penny. He is to own a certain number of shares in the company, and we are to work the vines over there in Hungary and own the rest of the shares. But where is the proof of these vines? His word! to be backed up by the proper papers, et cetera, he has sent for.

MRS. WRIGHTON. You do nothing with the

company till these papers arrive, so I don't see —

[*Interrupted.*

WRIGHTON. [*Interrupting.*] Suppose they never arrive?

MRS. WRIGHTON. He's discovered and no harm done.

WRIGHTON. There can be all sorts of delays, and he may have confederates writing from Hungary. How do we know? And meanwhile, what? He is getting an *entré* into our homes! Doing the same here, perhaps, as he did in London.

GERALDINE. [*Quickly.*] *What* did he do in London?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Quickly.*] Nothing, dear, that we're sure of.

GERALDINE. But tell me; you *must!* —

[*Interrupted.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. No! it is not *our* secret yet; when it is, you shall know the truth for good or ill.

WRIGHTON. He looks rather raggy, in spite of his smart clothes. His cuffs showed it. Of course he was after Geraldine's money — and if Geraldine's is impossible, then the next girl's —

GERALDINE. No, you don't *know* that!

WRIGHTON. If he is honest, why isn't his consul backing him up?

MRS. WRIGHTON. That's so!

[*Looking at* GERALDINE.

WRIGHTON. I asked him about his consul.

GERALDINE. Yes?

WRIGHTON. He said he didn't know him, and that the consul wouldn't know his name. And yet, you know, the man has such a winning way with him, if I didn't really *know* all I did, why, by

George, I should have been weaker than I was.

GERALDINE. I wish you had been! I see nothing in all you've said that may not be perfectly honest and above board, and I was always told that a man in *this country* was *innocent* till *proved* guilty.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Dear me, if that isn't like a girl! It will be our fault next that she drove him away from her house.

WRIGHTON. Well, next I played a strong card, in hopes it would make him show his hand. I told him frankly I thought him a charlatan!

GERALDINE. Oh, how *could* you?

WRIGHTON. I told him I knew of his behaviour to Miss Lang, which nothing could excuse.

GERALDINE. Oh, he will think I have told everything! What did he say?

WRIGHTON. Nothing.

GERALDINE. Nothing?

WRIGHTON. That was his *principal* reply to me!

MRS. WRIGHTON. How do you mean?

WRIGHTON. I didn't mince matters. I told him I doubted his vineyards — that I should warn my friends in his company, and would not join it myself. I told him I had reason to believe he was under an assumed name, and I had a suspicion as to who he really was.

GERALDINE. What answer did he make?

WRIGHTON. None!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Dick! ! !

WRIGHTON. He drew himself up till it seemed as if he were nine feet and I three, and said I had insulted him, that he didn't come to discuss his private affairs with me, but only a matter of business, and he would bid me good morning.

GERALDINE. And you *let him* go?

WRIGHTON. No!

GERALDINE. Ah!

WRIGHTON. I stopped him — at the door. I said, "If you have the right to resent strongly all I have said, no one will be more glad than I! and my apology shall be abject."

MRS. WRIGHTON. That was nice, Dick.

WRIGHTON. He didn't seem to understand; he was still in too much of a rage, poor fellow! You know I can't help liking him, in spite of his being —

GERALDINE. [*Interrupting him.*] Hush! You don't *know* what he is yet.

WRIGHTON. I said the matter of the company would naturally hold over till the arrival of his papers, and he said within three weeks.

GERALDINE. But how is it he's coming here?

WRIGHTON. Oh, I was weakening a little then, and I said, as to the other matter, would he be so good as to call upon my wife this afternoon?

MRS. WRIGHTON. And he agreed?

WRIGHTON. No, he refused. Then I took your name in vain [*To* GERALDINE.] and said it was, I knew, your desire.

GERALDINE. Yes?!

WRIGHTON. He bowed and said he would be here at five! *That's all!* [*Rising.*] You know now I'm away from him I realize he must be a scamp; but be careful, Janet, when you're with him — there's no doubt he is full of charm!

MRS. WRIGHTON. I know that. [*During this last speech a* SERVANT *has been arranging a tea-table in the farther room.* MRS. WRIGHTON *sees him.*] What are you doing, Thornton?

THORNTON. Laying the tea-table, madam.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But why? We don't take tea with our cards.

THORNTON. Excuse me, madam, but it's Thursday.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, of course, so it is; I forgot. [*To* WRIGHTON.] I had the bridge-whist class meet here on my day at home so as not to waste the afternoon!

GERALDINE. But how will you see Herr Carlman?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, I must just get rid of the people somehow. I'll do it.

WRIGHTON. Well, I'm going over to the club. I hope you're satisfied with my day's work.

GERALDINE. *I* am, and I thank you, only please don't side too quickly against him; let's give him a *big*, fair, open chance.

WRIGHTON. By all means! Good-by.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Wait a minute! [*Going to him.*] Try to be back by six, and we could take a *little* drive.

[*She leads him out into the hall, out of sight.* GERALDINE *watches, smiling softly. There is a silence, and then the sound of a kiss.*

GERALDINE. I heard you!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You have ears like Red Riding Hood's grandmother.

[*As she comes back.*

GERALDINE. I don't feel at all like bridge to-day.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Neither do I; but at this rate we'll never learn.

GERALDINE. You'll be sure to *see him*, won't you?

MRS. WRIGHTON. I am as anxious as you, dear. [*Putting her arm about her.*] I'm no longer fond

of you, Geraldine, for your mother's sake only, but for your own.

GERALDINE. And, as near as any one *could, you* take her place.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Thank you.

GERALDINE. Listen, the more I hear against him, the stronger I believe in him. I can't help it.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Smiling.*] That's your natural inborn stubbornness, dear. You had it as a child.

GERALDINE. I don't think it's *stubbornness* this time, I think it's *love.* No woman can *pretend* she *loves* a man, unless she has *faith in him,* and the only one *able* to destroy that *faith* should be the *man* she *loves.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, be careful, my dear, don't let yourself go! It looks so certain you must suffer terribly if you do.

GERALDINE. It's too late to say that now.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Really?

GERALDINE. Yes.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, then, if only we are wrong!

GERALDINE. What is it you *know* and *suspect?* You *must tell* me; I have a right to ask it.

MRS. WRIGHTON. I've given my promise to protect another, — but we think he is a certain man who broke the heart of one American girl in London six years ago. It is the same name.

GERALDINE. Carlman?

MRS. WRIGHTON. No, his *real* name.

GERALDINE. You *know* it?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes.

GERALDINE. And you won't tell me?

MRS. WRIGHTON. I am going to make *him* tell you — this afternoon.

GERALDINE. And you are taking all this trouble for me! — don't think me ungrateful.

MRS. WRIGHTON. We are only trying to protect your happiness in place of your mother and father.

GERALDINE. Look! You shall have my white rose!

[*Gives it to her,*

[*As* BUTLER *enters Left, and announces* MISS TOMPSON. *She enters.*

VI. [*As they greet her and she shakes hands.*] Am I late or early? Nobody else? Oh, I wish I'd known it; I'd have let him come in.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Who?

VI. Why, the Doctor! off the ship! I never had such a disappointment in my life! *Never! Well?!!* —

MRS. WRIGHTON. How?

VI. My *dear!!* He came to lunch with us

to-day, and without his uniform! I didn't know him! No, *really!* I thought it was the barber come to shave popper, and I told him popper'd shaved himself and gone out! Wasn't it *awful!* Of course I wanted to *sink* through the *floor!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Brass buttons *do* make a great difference!

VI. I should say they *did!* Why, he was perfectly *horrid!* I never saw *any one* look so *ordinary! Never!!* and he hardly spoke a word. Just sat there in all his hideous commonplaceness and I had to do *all* the talking!

GERALDINE. [*Smiling.*] That must have been very difficult for *you!*

VI. Aren't you mean! I think you might sympathize with me.

[BUTLER *announces* MRS. MATHEWSON, *who comes in.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*There are the usual general greetings.*] I'm not late? No, Mr. Crager isn't here yet to teach. I really think, especially considering this is the second lesson, Mrs. Wrighton, we ought to fine him something for being behind time.

MRS. WRIGHTON. My dear girl, you forget that you were *half an hour* late the first lesson.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Was I? My dear Miss Lang, what a lovely frock! Where did you get it? I suppose you brought it over — and, Miss Tompson, I called on your mother to-day.

VI. I'm sure mamma was tickled to death! I hope she was in.

MRS. MATHEWSON. She was. I knew, because I heard her maid telling the clerk she wanted some writing paper, but she sent down word she was "out," which I considered most thoughtful of her.

You know [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] one might as well make calls in Brooklyn as at the Waldorf, it takes about the same length of time.

VI. Probably she was being undulated. I know she was sorry!

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*Absent-mindedly.*] So was I.

[BUTLER *announces* MR. CRAGER, *who enters. He bows to all the ladies, who say,* "How do you do," *except* MRS. WRIGHTON, *who rises to greet him and shakes his hand.*

CRAGER. You are all in very good time to-day.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Yes, I have to run off in the middle of the lesson. I hope some one will turn up to take my place.

VI. Lord Tilbury's going to drop in; I hope you don't mind?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Delighted!

CRAGER. You might cut for partners now, ladies!

[*They do so.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. I promised to drive with my husband. He's got a new Hungarian wine company on his mind; and he never will do anything without me, for fear if it fails I'll say, "I told you so." I can tell you I don't allow the twenty years' difference in our ages to be wasted!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Mr. Mathewson has been speaking to my husband about the company.

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON, *as she sees how the cards are cut.*] Oh, mercy, must I play with you — I hoped to get Miss Lang; she plays the best of all of us.

GERALDINE. [*Laughingly.*] It isn't saying much, is it!

MRS. MATHEWSON. Did Mr. Mathewson tell

you of the beautiful poor young man from Budapesth who has the grapes, who has come over here evidently to make a rich marriage, and with whom we are all sure to be dead in love!

GERALDINE. Please, Mrs. Mathewson, we must begin.

CRAGER. Yes, please, ladies! ——

MRS. WRIGHTON. Excuse us, Mr. Crager, whose deal is it?

MRS. MATHEWSON. I *hate* dealing, don't say it's mine, I'd really rather be excused.

CRAGER. It's Mrs. Wrighton's deal!

MRS. WRIGHTON. How nice, I love dealing!

VI. [*Noticing* GERALDINE'S *silence and abstraction.*] Have you a headache?

GERALDINE. No, — thank you, — or yes, perhaps I have — something.

VI. I'm awfully sorry!

[BUTLER *announces* MRS. DREED, *who comes in.*

Oh, Mrs. Dreed!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Excuse me.

GERALDINE. Who's Mrs. Dreed?

MRS. MATHEWSON. A horrid woman!

VI. I met her yesterday. She was to have her gown made in Williamsburg.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Lays down her cards in the middle of the dealing, and goes to greet* MRS. DREED.] How do you do, I am so glad to see you. Do sit down and excuse me for a moment, won't you? I'm just dealing. Or will you have tea?

MRS. DREED. No, don't let me interrupt.

MRS. MATHEWSON. It's bridge!

MRS. DREED. I should *love* to watch! I lost my last penny yesterday!

[*Going to the table, she greets the others, who also greet her.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. We're only just *learning* it.

MRS. DREED. At this *late* day! Mercy! most women I know are taking lessons now *in forgetting it!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Taking up the half-dealt pack.*] O *dear!* where did I leave off? Does any one know where I left off?

VI.
GERALDINE. } No.
MRS. MATHEWSON.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Here! [*Throwing her cards down and mixing all the cards up.*] Deal over again. I was having the most awful hand, anyway!

CRAGER. You can't demand a new deal, Mrs. Mathewson, after having looked —

[*Interrupted.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*Laughingly.*] Well, I've mixed the cards all up now, we'll have to!!

[MRS. WRIGHTON *begins dealing again.*

MRS. DREED. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] Will you present Miss Lang to me?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Stopping her dealing.*] Oh, I thought you knew Geraldine. Dear, this is Mrs. Dreed.

[MRS. WRIGHTON *looks again hopelessly at her half pack and about the table, not knowing where she left off.*

CRAGER. You left off here, Mrs. Wrighton.

[*Pointing to player.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. We should never know how to play, you know, without a teacher.

MRS. DREED. [*To* GERALDINE.] I remember your mother well; and I am coming to Mrs. Wrighton's party at your house week after next.

GERALDINE. Isn't it charming of her to come and give her party there, and she's asking all my mother's old friends. I am looking forward to it; I shall be delighted to see you and Mr. Dreed.

MRS. DREED. Well, I'm not coming with Mr. Dreed, — we're divorced, — but I shall be there just the same.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Tries to stop her.*] I haven't room here, and besides it's for you, and it's time that ballroom was used, anyway!

CRAGER. Do you make the trump, Mrs. Wrighton? If so, you must make it, or else say, "Partner, will *you* make it?"

[BUTLER *announces* LORD TILBURY, *who enters.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Not rising.*] How do you do! [VI *and* GERALDINE *look up and nod.*] Mrs. Dreed, Lord Tilbury; Mrs. Mathewson, Lord Tilbury.

[*Introducing.*] And now excuse me, we are playing bridge, and are at a *very serious* point.

GERALDINE. Very! the *first play!*

[LORD TILBURY, *who is a little embarrassed, sits down beside* VI. *She gives him a coquettish look. All are examining their cards.*

VI. Whose turn is it?

CRAGER. Do you make the trump, Mrs. Wrighton?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Most certainly I do. I — er — I make it diamonds! — No, I don't! — I make it spades — yes, really, I make it spades.

VI. Oh, *darn* it!

GERALDINE. It's your lead, Vi.

MRS. MATHEWSON. *I've* got a *divine* hand!

MRS. DREED. Sh! —

VI. May I play, partner?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Laughing.*] Oh, I do think that's too silly!

GERALDINE. [*Laughing.*] Yes, what would happen if I said she couldn't?

[*They laugh.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Try it and see.

GERALDINE. *No!* you *can't* play!

VI. [*To* CRAGER, *laughing.*] Is that fair?

CRAGER. Certainly not. Your partner, if she doesn't want to double, must say, "Please."

GERALDINE. [*With a great deal of manner.*] *Please!!*

[TILBURY *is looking at* VI'S *hand.*

GERALDINE. [*Looks at her watch and speaks aside to* MRS. WRIGHTON.] It is getting near *five.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Aside to* GERALDINE.] I'm watching!

VI. [*Plays.*] There!

MRS. MATHEWSON. You've been abroad, Miss Tompson?

VI. Yes, for over a year. We've been *everywhere*, — all over the place, and seen *everything!*

CRAGER. It's your play, Mrs. Mathewson.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Oh, I beg every one's pardon. What lead?

GERALDINE. [*Showing.*] There.

MRS. MATHEWSON. O dear! — Mrs. Dreed, do give me a hint. [MRS. DREED *goes behind her and plays a card for her.*] You're just the person I want to see, Miss Tompson, because there's one thing I haven't seen, and I'm thinking of going over this spring if it's worth while.

[GERALDINE *plays.*

GERALDINE. [*Looking at* CRAGER.] Right?

CRAGER. Yes.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Now shall I play that or *that*, Lord Tilbury?

TILBURY. Either would be *cheating!* You must play *that!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh! and lose it? [*Plays.*] That's too bad.

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*To* VI.] Did you see the Acropolis?

VI. [*Echoes dumbly.*] The Acrop — what?

MRS. MATHEWSON. The Acropolis.

GERALDINE. You took that trick, Vi.

VI. Did I? That's lovely! [*To* MRS. MATHEWSON.] No, I don't think we went there, and, O dear, mamma'll have a fit if we've missed something — where is it?

MRS. MATHEWSON. In Greece.

VI. We *went* to Greece.

TILBURY. [*To* VI.] It's your play.

VI. [*To* TILBURY, *holding up her cards.*] Go ahead!

[*He plays for her.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. It's in Athens.

VI. We *went* to Athens!

CRAGER. Excuse me, Mrs. Mathewson, you must attend to the game.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Just a minute, Mr. Crager! The Acropolis, the most beautiful of all ancient ruins, — a thing on a hill!

VI. Oh, *that!* Oh, yes, we saw *that!* with and without sunset, and with and without moon! You know mamma and I can't remember one-half the places we've seen, but popper can, because he's kept a diary and put it down every night! Made mamma so mad, because she's always dead tired and crazy to go straight to sleep!

MRS. MATHEWSON. *My* play.

[*Plays.*

GERALDINE. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] If you let more visitors in, Aunt Janet, how will you get rid of them?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* GERALDINE.] True, dear. [*To the others.*] Excuse me.

[*Rising, rings bell.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. We can't look at her cards, can we!

GERALDINE. Really! I wouldn't like to play with you for money!

[*She and* CRAGER *examine her hand.*

MRS. DREED. Oh, Janet. [*Going to* MRS. WRIGHTON *and speaking to her, aside.*] I came in to-day in hopes of finding a stray young man with you to fill a vacant place at dinner to-night. It's such a nuisance having a man back out at the

last minute. I don't think illness is any excuse for a *man*, do you?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Laughing.*] Oh, none in the world!

TILBURY. [*As* MRS. MATHEWSON *plays.*] You must have five aces, Mrs. Mathewson.

MRS. DREED. I was wondering, what about this Mr. — er — What's-his-name — who's giving you bridge lessons?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Mr. Crager is charming.

CRAGER. [*As card is played.*] No, you mustn't make that play, you must play the club.

[SERVANT *comes in and waits aside.*

MRS. DREED. But you know, is he — a *gentleman?* Has he ever *dined* with you?

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Quizzing her.*] If you mean does he eat with his knife — I assure you not even peas!

MRS. DREED. Don't be disagreeable! You don't think people would mind? This is my smartest dinner of the season!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Smiling, amused.*] *So sorry I'm not invited!* I can only say *I* should love to go out to dinner with Mr. Crager.

MRS. DREED. Oh, well, anyway he can take in mother! I must have another man, and that sort of people are always free! You must introduce me, dear.

[*She goes back to the whist table.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* SERVANT.] Thornton, I wish to have it said at the door that I am indisposed and not receiving to-day.

THORNTON. Yes, madam.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*In lower voice.*] Except a Mr. Carlman; I wish to see him.

THORNTON. Yes, madam.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Thornton!

THORNTON. Yes, madam.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Do you know if my carriage is at the door?

THORNTON. It has just driven up, madam.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Thank you.

[THORNTON *goes out at back.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Aside to* CRAGER *as she takes her place.*] I want you to dine with me *to-night* and go to the theatre, will you?

CRAGER. Thank you, very much.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Whose turn is it?

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*Putting down her cards.*] I'm awfully sorry, but I shall have to go. [*She rises.*] Good-by! [*Shaking hands with* MRS. WRIGHTON, *who rises.*] Good-by, everybody. When is the next lesson?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Next Tuesday.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Impossible! I have a concert.

MRS. WRIGHTON. How about Friday?

VI. Impossible for *me!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Wednesday?

CRAGER. I'm sorry, but I have another class.

MRS. MATHEWSON. Let's skip a week; it'll do us all good.

GERALDINE. Oh, but we'll *never* learn!

MRS. WRIGHTON. We'll decide later and let you know.

[*The* SERVANT *enters with a visiting card.*

THORNTON. Mr. Mathewson is in the carriage, madam, and has sent you this message.

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*Reads it aloud.*] "*Wrighton knows something about our Hungarian charmer and has upset the wine combination for the present, so don't interrupt your cards, unless you're losing!*"

[*She laughs at that.*] Oh, well, I'd better go with him, anyway, I've a little neuralgia. I think remembering all the rules, and keeping the different cards in one's mind gives one a headache. Good-by.

[*They all echo, "Good-by."*

[MRS. MATHEWSON *goes out Left, shown by* THORNTON, *who goes out after her.*

MRS. DREED. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] Won't you introduce Mr. Crager, dear?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Mr. Crager, Mrs. Dreed.

CRAGER. [*Bows.*] Mrs. Dreed.

MRS. DREED. [*Shakes hands, speaks effusively.*] I'm delighted, I've heard so much of you from so many friends. Every one agrees you are *quite* the very best teacher of bridge.

CRAGER. You are very kind, Mrs. Dreed.

MRS. DREED. We must play together some day.

Good-by. [*Shakes hands, pretends to go, and comes back.*] Oh, by the way, *do* dine with me to-night, won't you? At eight. I shall expect you.

[*Smiling, half bows, and turns to go.*

CRAGER. I beg your pardon, I am sorry, I am engaged.

MRS. DREED. [*Turning, and off her guard.*] What?

CRAGER. [*Conventionally.*] I'm very sorry, but I am engaged.

MRS. DREED. [*With a decided change to a supercilious manner.*] Oh, really. So sorry. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] Good-by, my dear. [*To others.*] Good-by.

[*They reply, "Good-by."*

[MRS. DREED *goes out Left.*

TILBURY. I am getting awfully fond of America, Mrs. Wrighton.

GERALDINE. I told you, Lord Tilbury! How is Rosy blowing to-day, hot or cold?

TILBURY. I say! I'm rather ashamed, but I'm afraid she's blowing a little chilly to-day!

VI. Who's Rosy?

GERALDINE. Hasn't he told you?

VI. No!

CRAGER. [*Who is about to go, after having said good-by to all.*] Mrs. Wrighton, I feel really ashamed to pretend that these are lessons. Don't you think we'd better give them up?

[MRS. WRIGHTON *goes with him toward the door Left.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Aside, confidentially.*] We'll break up this class, and Miss Lang and I will start another. Till to-night at seven?

CRAGER. You're awfully kind.

[*Goes out Left.*

[VI *and* TILBURY *rise, also* GERALDINE.

VI. We must go, too!

GERALDINE. I hope, Vi, you're showing New York to Lord Tilbury?

TILBURY. Oh, she's dragging me all over the shop!

VI. But I'm running short of interesting places for the daytime! Do you think he'd enjoy the Eden Musée?

GERALDINE. Yes, he's sure to love it!

[*Laughing.*

VI. Which most, that or Grant's Monument? He's seen Cleopatra's Needle, and Tuxedo, and Madison Square Garden, and the Washington Arch, and the Bowery.

MRS. WRIGHTON. My dear Miss Tompson, there's no street in the world so beautiful as Riverside Drive, — take him there.

TILBURY. [*To* GERALDINE.] Is there an overground, underground, or on-the-ground railway there?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Not *yet!*

TILBURY. [*With relief.*] Oh, thank Heaven; then we can take a cab!

GERALDINE. Do you go everywhere with Lord Tilbury alone?

VI. Yes, nobody knows me here, and besides, popper's invited him out to Butte City to visit us all winter, hasn't he?

TILBURY. Mr. Tompson has really been rippin' kind.

GERALDINE. And I suppose that makes a difference! Of course, Lord Tilbury, an English girl —

VI. [*Interrupting.*] My *dear!* From what he tells me, an English girl must be too awful for words, just too *perfectly* AWFUL!!

GERALDINE. Vi!

[*Reprovingly.*

VI. Oh, I'm always perfectly honest, ain't I, Lord Tilbury? and I owned up that I think Englishmen are — well! — simply *lovely!!* Good-by!

[*She goes out Left.*

TILBURY. Good-by!

GERALDINE and MRS. WRIGHTON. Good-by.

[TILBURY *follows* VI *out.*

VI. [*Off stage.*] Oh, just wait a minute!

[*She comes back quickly.*

VI. I can marry him if I want to. I thought you'd guess! Did you ever see such perfectly beautiful pants as he wears? Oh, I think they're just too swell for anything! But of course, you know, we can't let him wear them in Butte City, — the boys would yell after him in the streets. Good-by!

[*She goes out Left.*

[*The two women echo,* "Good-by," *and look at each other, a little bewildered, and then laugh.*

GERALDINE. Isn't she wonderful!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Ringing bell.*] I never saw anything like her. She is so amusing.

GERALDINE. Yes, and after a fifteen years' heavy diet of the German fräuleins of Stuttgart, you can imagine what a colossal joy she is to me! But you must realize that underneath everything she has an awfully good heart. That girl as a friend and as a woman would be as true as steel! And she always affects me like a tonic, — I feel doubly hopeful now of your interview.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Do you want to see him?

GERALDINE. Of course I want to, but I will do as you say.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Suppose you go into that room—[*Motioning to back.*]—and we'll draw the curtains.

GERALDINE. And I listen without his knowing it? Oh, no, I wouldn't for worlds!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You're right.

[THORNTON *comes in from back.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. You can take away the card table, Thornton.

GERALDINE. It's after five. Oh, do you think he won't come? Won't he come?

MRS. WRIGHTON. I hope so. Thornton, if the gentleman I spoke to you of should come, tell me before you show him in.

THORNTON. Yes, madam.

[*Having rearranged the table, he goes out.*

GERALDINE. You know, suppose he is poor as he seems, and suppose *all* his hopes and expec-

tations are centred on forming this company, and it is broken up, think what that will mean to him! Maybe it is *because* he *is poor* that he felt he couldn't ask me to marry him!

MRS. WRIGHTON. That theory is not altogether plausible, my dear; he is what the papers call "a titled foreigner."

GERALDINE. *Titled?*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, there! I've let that much out, anyway.

GERALDINE. Maybe he doesn't think me a good enough match if he is so high.

MRS. WRIGHTON. That's not plausible either! He's not so high as all that; in fact, dear, it breaks my heart to tell you, but we practically know he's *low*, as low as he can be.

GERALDINE. But you don't *absolutely know?*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Which is why we don't tell you more.

GERALDINE. I can't, I won't believe it.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Stubbornness!

GERALDINE. Or — *love!*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Even after what he said to you?

GERALDINE. I told you, he doesn't understand our language enough to judge him by mere *words!*

[THORNTON *comes in.*

THORNTON. Mr. Carlman, madam.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Show him in.

[THORNTON *goes out.*

GERALDINE. I want to see him! I want to give him his chance.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Go upstairs, and perhaps I will send for you.

GERALDINE. [*Going, stops.*] You'll be *kind?* And *help* him?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Make haste! [GERALDINE *goes out back and turns to the Right.* MRS. WRIGHTON *stands in the centre of the room and waits. A moment's pause.* THORNTON *announces* MR. CARLMAN. KINSEY *comes in, and* THORNTON *exits.* KINSEY *bows.* MRS. WRIGHTON *holds out her hand.*] The olive branch!

KINSEY. [*Taking her hand, bows low over it.*] If I vas late, it iss ze fault of Mr. Wrighton.

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Surprised.*] Have you just seen him?

KINSEY. Oh, no, I vish I hafe nefer see him. It iss he zat has now spoil all mine plan and hope. For two veeks, ze night an' ze day, I hafe vorked — [*He breaks.*] He hafe told you, yess?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes.

KINSEY. And now ve must also vait more as two veeks longer, an' who knows vat vill not happen in ze two veeks?

MRS. WRIGHTON. If one is *honest*, one needn't be afraid to wait.

KINSEY. Ah, you do not understan'. Zis company vill gife to me freedom, but ze freedom is possible to come too late to mean anyzing to me. But you hafe vish to see me. Egscuse me if I ask you for vhy?

MRS. WRIGHTON. I want to talk to you about Miss Lang!

KINSEY. She hafe told you perhaps, yess?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes.

KINSEY. I guess because he hafe know!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Why did you behave as you did?

KINSEY. Pecause I loaf her! —

MRS. WRIGHTON. People do not usually *insult* those they love.

KINSEY. I did not mean. Ze heart vas too strong for ze lips!

[*Smiling.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*In an outburst.*] Ah! if only we could *trust* you!

KINSEY. Madame!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Tell me your name is NOT *Count* Kinsey!

KINSEY. [*Surprise, a second's pause.*] Ah! *She* tell too! The Fräulein. Vell!! —

MRS. WRIGHTON. Never mind who told me; tell me your real name.

KINSEY. [*Drawing himself up.*] I hafe me *no* name here but only Carlman.

MRS. WRIGHTON. That is *not your* name?

[KINSEY *doesn't answer.*] Tell me then *if* you *were* in the embassy at London.

KINSEY. I vill tell you nussing? madam, I do not understan' you hafe ze right to ask me so. — Who I vas and vat I vas is mine affair. Your husbant hafe great injury me done in one vay, I tink now you vould in anozer. I bid you goot afternoon.

[GERALDINE *enters through the curtains at back.*

GERALDINE. You didn't send, I've come down, I couldn't wait. [*She sees him leaving.*] He's going?!

KINSEY. [*Looking at the curtains.*] Vas she listening!

GERALDINE. What?

KINSEY. No! Oh, no, I am sure!

GERALDINE. No what?

KINSEY. No nussing!

MRS. WRIGHTON. He won't answer me, Geraldine; maybe he will you. Ask him his own name.

GERALDINE. I promised him I wouldn't.

KINSEY. What ze difference iss it who or vat I vas? Your husband hafe me made great troubles; I vould hafe nussing to do viz him. You hurt me here to-day, I do not know for vhy. Meess Lang — she despise me.

GERALDINE. I do *not* despise you.

KINSEY. I have insult you.

GERALDINE. Do you remember what you said?

KINSEY. Ze vords burn here, all ze night, all ze day.

GERALDINE. What were they?

KINSEY. Zat I could not ask of you to be mine vife.

GERALDINE. I know, — but why not?

KINSEY. I vas not free.

GERALDINE. *How "not free"?*

KINSEY. I vas ashame to tell you!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Don't ask more, Geraldine.

GERALDINE. Yes, I will! This is where I was wrong before. Don't stop me now, please — or I'll say or do something I'd be sorry for! Is the reason you are ashamed an *insult* to *me?*

KINSEY. No, oh, no!

GERALDINE. And no dishonour to you?

KINSEY. *No!*

GERALDINE. I knew it! I knew it!!

KINSEY. And soon it vill be finish, I tink, and I can zen tell you eferyzing. — It vas to hafe been tomorrow, but —

[*Looking at* MRS. WRIGHTON.

GERALDINE. [*With suppressed excitement.*] I will wait! Do you hear, I WILL WAIT!!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Geraldine, dear!

GERALDINE. No, Aunt Janet, let me finish!! [*To* KINSEY.] When you come to tell me, you will find me ready to listen!

[*She gives him the white rose which she takes from* MRS. WRIGHTON.

[WRIGHTON *enters Left.*

WRIGHTON. Ah! Mr. Carlman, I thought I might catch you here. I've been to the meeting of directors of your *quasi* company; I have seen your maps and the cables which you purport to have received!

KINSEY. SIR?!

GERALDINE. [*Angry.*] Mr. Wrighton!!

[MRS. WRIGHTON *seizes* GERALDINE'S *hand.*

WRIGHTON. Oh, hear me out! It is the Kinsey estate in Hungary — this that you wish to farm out to us?

KINSEY. It *iss!*

WRIGHTON. This power over the Kinsey estate is in your hands?

KINSEY. *It iss!*

WRIGHTON. [*Angry.*] Your scheme is a *fraud*, sir!

KINSEY. [*Controlling himself with difficulty.*] Gott!!

GERALDINE. No!

[MRS. WRIGHTON *restrains* GERALDINE.

WRIGHTON. I have warned my friends.

KINSEY. But ze cables?

WRIGHTON. Worthless! How do we know who sent them?

KINSEY. You insult mine honour, sir.

WRIGHTON. In that case Miss Lang will uphold me that turn about is fair play.

GERALDINE. [*In real distress.*] No! No! I won't uphold you!

WRIGHTON. Enough to say the scheme is ended.

KINSEY. You tink you have ruin me, Mr. Wrighton?

WRIGHTON. My only object has been to serve my friends and Miss Lang. These gentlemen asked me to give you back these papers.

[*Handing them to* KINSEY.

KINSEY. In two veeks zese same gentlemen vill *ask* of *me* to gife zem back to zem.

WRIGHTON. I doubt it — COUNT *Kinsey!*

[*Pause.*

KINSEY. [*About to go, starts and turns in great surprise, then recovers and bows.*] Zat is *not* my name!

[*He goes out Left.*

WRIGHTON. Liar!

GERALDINE. No, don't! I won't listen to you.

You're *not* fair! You're not fair! You made me love you, but now I *hate* you for what you've done! I *hate* you! [*Going to him.*] Oh, you were brutal to him, brutal; how could you?

[*Sobbing.*

WRIGHTON. My dear child, *I had* to be! You don't know what I have to tell you! Fräulein recognized him as Count Kinsey on the boat; to *her* he *acknowledged* it!

GERALDINE. To her? He did!

WRIGHTON. Yes, under a promise of secrecy; but she was worried and told my wife. I cabled to London after my interview with him this morning, and here is my reply. [GERALDINE *turns away from* WRIGHTON.] "Yes, Kinsey sailed America week October 30th, after American girl, was in embassy here, worst reputation possible, letter follows." It is from a secretary of our legation.

[*There is silence, broken only by* GERALDINE'S *sobs.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*Going to her.*] My dear, my *dear.* . . .

GERALDINE. [*Sobbing as she speaks.*] No! No! I don't *want* to be sympathized with. I know you mean it all for my good, both of you, but I tell you you're wrong! *wrong!* [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] He explained that what he said the other day about the things that held him back meant no insult to me, nor dishonour to him either. It's because he's poor, I tell you, I can see it clearly. He's poor and he knows I am rich! This company would have made it possible for him to ask a woman to marry him, and you, *you*, my best friends, have done all you could to rob him of his chance.

WRIGHTON. Because I don't believe in him. I know too much of his record.

GERALDINE. [*Still crying, but beginning to control her tears.*] You *don't* know, you *don't* know, you only guess!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Why confess his name to Fräulein and deny it to us? And why had he concealed it?

WRIGHTON. That's it! Why? — unless he was ashamed or afraid.

GERALDINE. [*Having controlled her tears.*] Perhaps, if he is *Count Kinsey*, he is above making use of his title. Other men have come over here only to sell their titles. He has proved himself *above* that!

MRS. WRIGHTON. You are young, dear, and inexperienced in the world, — living way off in that little German town, — and love blinds your insight. This man's reputation is known and it is abominable!

[*At this* GERALDINE *frees herself from* MRS. WRIGHTON'S *arms.*

WRIGHTON. You heard what I read just now, Geraldine, from an unprejudiced and responsible source.

GERALDINE. But you haven't proved it yet that he *is* Count Kinsey, and if he is, there may be more than one in Hungary. No, you wouldn't believe in *his* cable, — *I* won't believe in *yours!*

WRIGHTON. I have sent both to London and Budapesth for further and more reliable proof. In a fortnight I am only too afraid I will be able to give you that proof.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And *if* we prove to you this man is unworthy your confidence and your love, will you let us, who are trying to take your mother's place, guide you just a little on your road to happiness?

GERALDINE. [*Very firmly.*] Yes, *if* you *do prove* to *me* that he is unworthy!

MRS. WRIGHTON. That, Dick, is all we want.

GERALDINE. [*Excited.*] And if your proof comes and after all exonerates him, if all these things you believe now prove somehow some hideous mistake — *you'll* turn around and be his *friend?*

[*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Yes!

GERALDINE. [*More excited, to* WRIGHTON.] And you too, — you'll withdraw your influence against his company?

WRIGHTON. I'll *form* that company for him!

GERALDINE. [*Laughing hysterically.*] Ah! that's good! That's good! [*She goes to* WRIGHTON, *half embracing him, and then goes to* MRS. WRIGHTON *and hugs her close.*] Now I can be happy! — *wait* and be happy, for he and I will win, I tell you!

[*Kissing* MRS. WRIGHTON *in an hysteria of tears and laughter.*] Forgive me for being angry just now! Forgive me! And look! I'm not crying! I'm LAUGHING!! I'm laughing because I'm the happiest girl in the world again! The HAPPIEST!! [*Laughing and crying.*] For he and I will win!! I know, *whoever* he turns out to be, the man I love is *true!*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT IV

The conservatory in Geraldine's house. The room is a mass of potted plants. There is a semi-circular marble bench at Right, banked behind with a row of orange trees. The Blue Hungarian Band is playing on a dais at Left. The musicians are screened by bay trees and palms. The moonlight is seen through the roof. The entrance from the ballroom is Right. LORD TILBURY *and* VI *are seated on the marble bench. The band finishes a waltz.*

VI. You know, I haven't had the slightest desire to *marry* a lord! Of course *I* was *dying* to know you on the steamer; but then I've always been crazy to meet lords and dukes and such things, just to

say I had; but as to being a "lady," especially when it means living in London! I've always thought "*Excuse me!*"

TILBURY. Only part of the year. I'll promise to bring you to America every winter.

VI. If you *didn't*, *I* should certainly *bring you!* [*Laughing.*] I just love my home. I know Europe's perfectly grand, and I'm not finding any fault with London or Paris or Vienna or anywhere, but for a good time among your *friends*, Butte City beats them all in my eyes! Just wait till you see it!

TILBURY. I hope to have that pleasure very soon, — don't mind if I call you darling, or something of that sort?

VI. I don't care, but don't you think you'd better wait till I've really decided.

TILBURY. Well, you *will* give me a decided answer when *we* get home?

VI. *"We"* get home! Isn't that rushing it just a little?

TILBURY. Really! Well, then, when we all get to Butte City?

VI. Yes, that I promise.

[*He takes her hand and holds it for a moment in happy silence.* MRS. MATHEWSON *comes, with a silly-looking young man, to take the marble seat. They are disappointed to find it occupied.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. O dear, of course that Tompson girl is still there! They've monopolized the best seat in the house the entire evening.

YOUNG MAN. Never mind, let's go back and dance.

[*They turn and go out.*

TILBURY. Are you happy?

VI. [*Doubtfully.*] Oh, yes —? ——

TILBURY. [*Delighted.*] *So am I! Rippin'!!*

[*A moment's silence. Another couple come and look to see if the bench is empty.*

GIRL. Oh, pshaw!

[*They go out.*

VI. [*Withdrawing her hand.*] Somebody might come along. Say — *who* is *Rosy?*

TILBURY. [*Has entirely forgotten.*] Rosy? *What* Rosy?

VI. Why I've heard Miss Lang tease you once or twice about a *Rosy!*

TILBURY. [*Embarrassed.*] Oh, *that* Rosy!

[*He says no more.*

VI. WHO *is* she?

TILBURY. [*More embarrassed.*] Oh, er — she's — er — a sort of *Spanish girl*, that — er — I thought Miss Lang reminded me of once.

VI. And didn't *I* ever remind you of her?

TILBURY. Er — yes — I er — believe you did. . . .

VI. Where is she now?

TILBURY. I dunno!

VI. When did you see her last?

TILBURY. [*Unwillingly.*] The day I sailed.

VI. [*Who is getting more and more excited with her questions and their answers.*] Oh, did she see you off?

TILBURY. Well — er — yes — it answered that purpose.

VI. What's her other name?

TILBURY. [*Who is in agony.*] Boggs.

VI. Boggs! Really! Sounds *very Spanish!!*

TILBURY. Well, she was only — Spanish at the Gaiety, don't you know.

VI. No, *I don't* know! Has she written you?

TILBURY. No!

VI. Look me square in the face.

TILBURY. [*He does so, and weakens.*] She cabled.

VI. Show it to me.

TILBURY. It's torn up!

VI. What did it say?

TILBURY. [*Rebelling.*] No! Really! —

[*Interrupted.*

VI. What did it say? [*Rising.*] Or I go back to the ballroom — and to Butte City *alone!*

TILBURY. It said, "Come back by next boat like a dear old guy."

VI. [*Sitting.*] And did you?

TILBURY. Of course not, — ain't I *here?*

VI. *Why* didn't you?

TILBURY. Because of you.

VI. Were you *engaged* to *her?*

TILBURY. Oh, no! — I wouldn't call it *engaged!*

[*A third couple come to see if the bench is empty and go away angry.*

VI. How long did it take you to forget Miss Rosy *Carmencita Boggs?*

TILBURY. Ever since I've known *you.*

VI. H'm! *Two weeks! Listen.* I think we *won't wait* till we get to Butte City.

TILBURY. [*Delighted.*] What?!!

VI. No, I think it's best that we should be *engaged* AT *once!* Oh! look out for the band.

[*He wants to kiss her, but dares not. The band begins again.*

TILBURY. I say, it is rather a beastly nuisance, isn't it, proposing to a girl straight in front of a whole Hungarian band!

VI. You'll be pleased to understand that we *are engaged* all the same, with or without the band!

TILBURY. Rather!!

VI. And now *we're* off our minds, I want to talk to you about Geraldine Lang.

TILBURY. She's a *jolly* girl!

VI. You'd better think so — it was she introduced us! Well, she broke right down with me the other day and told me *her* story. She's in love with that Hungarian who was on the boat, Mr. Carlman.

TILBURY. Yes, a jolly nice chap!

VI. Well, none of her friends think so, and have kept them apart; and now she has no idea where he is, and is afraid he may be awfully hard up. She knows he's practically not got a cent, and his business plans have been entirely upset by *her friends!* Somehow or other, you and I've got to *find him.*

TILBURY. And *then* what will we do with him?

VI. Oh, *if we find him, she's* got to do the rest!

[MRS. MATHEWSON *comes again with the same young man to see if the bench is free.*

MRS. MATHEWSON. [*In disgust.*] Well! they'll *grow* to that bench!

[*They go back to the ballroom, laughing;* VI *and* TILBURY *turn and see them.*

VI. It doesn't seem very *private* here, does it?

TILBURY. Rather not.

VI. I think I'll go tell mamma! It's all very well for me to stick up my nose at your title, but *mamma!* Oh, my! Butte City won't hold her when I tell her I've decided to marry *you, not for a minute!* and I bet you *she* buys a *tiara before she leaves here!*

[*Both laugh and move on to where they can see the Hungarian band.*

VI. [*Speaking of the band.*] Aren't they all

handsome! But the ship's *doctor* has discounted uniforms and gold braid for *me!*

TILBURY. [*Who recognizes* KINSEY.] By George!

VI. What?

TILBURY. Turn around quick! [*They face the other way.*] I've just seen the man.

VI. What man! I've seen *twenty* dreams!

TILBURY. Herr Carlman!

VI. Here!

TILBURY. In the band!

VI. Goodness! Did he see you?

TILBURY. I don't think so, but I'm going to speak to him.

VI. Oh, do! [*The band stops playing.*] And be awfully nice to him. Wouldn't it be *fun* if we could make *them* as happy as we are! Find out what the trouble all is, — and I'll go tell

mamma about *us!* She'll be tickled to death! I'll bet she hasn't missed a single dance — *she's* a *wonder!!*

[*She goes to the ballroom.*

[*The other musicians are talking among themselves.* KINSEY *remains a little separate, by himself.* TILBURY *comes near to him.*

TILBURY. Pardon me, Mr. Carlman! [KINSEY *starts and looks to see who is speaking. He sees* TILBURY *and is not pleased. He bows somewhat stiffly.*] I must speak with you a moment; may I?

KINSEY. There vill be one minute or two between ze next number.

TILBURY. I say, can these Johnnies understand English?

KINSEY. No, not a one, not a vord!

TILBURY. [*Very embarrassed.*] I don't know how

to say it, old man, but you mustn't take offence, old chap, because I mean it in the friendliest way, old fellow, in a *brotherly* way, I do really! We're both of us foreigners over here, you know, old chap!

KINSEY. Yess?

TILBURY. I am going to marry a great friend of Miss Lang's, — Miss Tompson.

KINSEY. I make you my congratulations, sir.

TILBURY. No, wait, old fellow. She has told me how unhappy Miss Lang is to be separated from you by her friends and not to know where you are.

KINSEY. It vill end, I hope, on to-morrow.

TILBURY. Really, I say, old chap, I am glad!

[*He involuntarily holds out his hand, and the two men shake hands warmly.*

KINSEY. [*Moved.*] I tank you.

TILBURY. Now it was Miss Lang, you see, who introduced me to Vi, and we want to help *you* and *her* along!

KINSEY. I tank you.

TILBURY. No, don't; tell me something I can *do!* — Why are you here, anyway, old man, doing this sort of game? If you need money —

[*Embarrassed.*

KINSEY. I hope not to need after to-morrow. But I am zis doing now because ten days ago I hafe not one penny and I hafe hunger. I hafe to do someting quick, immediate! — I always hafe play, I go to mine own music, and they gife me a place. — Vhen I hafe heard zey come here, I tink no I *cannot*, and zen — [*Smiling.*] — I could not — I tink ze word — *resist*, because I say, no one vill recognize *me*, and I vill *see* HER. But no, she hafe not been in ze room.

TILBURY. Delighted, old chap! But now what's this about to-morrow? You know you *must* let me help you. Suppose your scheme falls down, old boy, you can't stay on doing this fiddle business!

KINSEY. It vill *not* fall down. I hafe a company form to export Hungarian vines, and zey did doubt mine — ze word?

TILBURY. Credentials?

KINSEY. Yess! Zey did *doubt* me! But first zey have said ze plan vas good, great! — much *money!* To-day ze mail from Europe iss in, and I hafe by me *now* [*Touching his breast pocket.*] all ze papers to prove all vhat I say iss true, and to-morrow ze company vill come back — all except one; I will get anozer in his place, because he hafe done to me too much harm! [*An idea comes suddenly to him.*] Oh! Mr. Tompson, ze fader of ze young lady you marry, — very rich, not?

TILBURY. [*Resenting.*] Yes, but I've plenty of money; that makes no difference to me.

KINSEY. Ah! You are angry quick at which I did not mean, how I vas right! *I had nussing; I could not* ask Miss Lang to be my vife; all ze world would hafe said he marry her for ze money! but ven I hafe half ze shares of mine company — and Mr. Tompson when he would come he vill make ze number.

TILBURY. Oh, I'm sure Vi can make him!

[*The leader taps and the orchestra begins.*

KINSEY. Pardons!

[*Goes back to his place.*

[VI *reënters.*

VI. My dear! — I mean Lord Tilbury! — have you the slightest idea what time it is?

TILBURY. No.

VI. Of course not; well, it's nearly four o'clock!

TILBURY. Really!

VI. And how long do you suppose we've been sitting *there?*

TILBURY. I dunno!

VI. Of course *you wouldn't! Three* hours!

TILBURY. Oh! I say!!

[*Laughing.*

VI. Isn't it awful, *perfectly awful!!* Come on, we're going! We've waked up popper; he's been asleep for hours in the smoking room, and mamma's so tired she shows her age!

[MR. *and* MRS. WRIGHTON *enter.*

We were just looking for you to say good night.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Must you go?

VI. We've had a perfectly lovely time, simply — well, the nicest time I've ever had in my life.

[*Shaking hands.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. I'm delighted.

[VI *shakes hands with* MR. WRIGHTON.

TILBURY. It really has been a rippin' little time!

[*He shakes hands with* MRS. WRIGHTON *and then with* MR. WRIGHTON.

WRIGHTON. We're very glad you could come, Lord Tilbury.

VI. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] I can't keep it! He's going to be *Mr. Tompson.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. What?

VI. We're going to be married!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, really! —

TILBURY. It's rather sudden. But you see you had so many pretty girls at your party, Miss Tompson got fidgy and thought she'd better nail me instanter.

VI. Oh, my! what a whopper!! But we must

hurry or mamma'll get another crowsfoot, and popper'll go sleep-walking! Good night.

TILBURY. Lady Tilbury.

VI. Don't that sound perfectly lovely?

[*She goes to him, and takes his right arm.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Good night, Lady Tilbury.

[TILBURY *and* VI *start.*

VI. Don't we go well together?

TILBURY. Rippin'. Good night.

[*All say, "Good night."*

[VI *and* TILBURY *go out.*

WRIGHTON. [*Smiling.*] Well! They haven't lost their time!

MRS. WRIGHTON. I'm envious for Geraldine; I wish I could see her face as happy — with her hand on the arm of the man she loved.

WRIGHTON. Has she enjoyed the party?

MRS. WRIGHTON. She's tried to, but you could

SEE her *trying*, and I think she's relieved now that everybody's going. I'm so tired I don't think I'll give another ball as long as I live.

WRIGHTON. I know why. She knows the answers to my letters to London and Budapesth have arrived.

MRS. WRIGHTON. But —

WRIGHTON. She watched the paper to see when the mails were in. She cornered me when I came home this afternoon and asked me point blank.

MRS. WRIGHTON. And what did you say?

WRIGHTON. I lied; but if I'd told her then, she wouldn't have appeared, I know, to-night.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh, Dick! it's true then — the letters *confirm?*

WRIGHTON. Our worst fears!

MRS. WRIGHTON. It will break her heart!

WRIGHTON. She refused to wait till to-morrow

morning, and so we compromised on *to-night*, when the last guests were gone. I told her to bring Fräulein — here they are now.

[GERALDINE *enters with* FRÄULEIN. GERALDINE *is excited and forcedly happy.*

GERALDINE. There's no one left *downstairs*, and I've done my best — I *can't wait any longer.* You will open your letters now, won't you?

WRIGHTON. Yes, dear.

GERALDINE. Hum! That "*dear*" has a hint of pity in it and shows what you expect to find, but you'll not! You'll see! It *has* been a *beautiful* party. [*To* MRS. WRIGHTON.] Every one said so, and *looked* it, which is *more!*

WRIGHTON. [*Takes out two long envelopes.*] Here are the letters.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Those men won't hear?

[*Indicating band.*

WRIGHTON. None of them understand English, and besides, they will be gone soon.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Then let's sit down.

GERALDINE. You sit, and Fräulein. I couldn't! I feel on tiptoe! I must stand to meet my happiness, which is coming out of those envelopes. Those, dear. [*Her whole manner and expression change.*] Those *are* the ones?

WRIGHTON. Yes.

GERALDINE. And they have been opened! The *first falsehood!*

[*And she assumes an attitude and expression of defiance.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Geraldine, it was for your sake, to spare you through the evening. Don't be on the defensive with us who love you; we are all striving for the same goal, — your happiness!

GERALDINE. [*Taking off her long, white gloves*

nervously.] Read the letters! Read them! Of course I know now they are *against* Mr. Carlman.

WRIGHTON. The first letter is from our present ambassador in London, who happens to be an old *friend of mine.* [*Reads.*] "*My secretary cabled you in brief. Count Kinsey was in the Austro-Hungarian embassy in London six years ago. He was obliged to resign his position, owing to a most painful scandal, affecting the honour of one of our countrywomen, the beautiful Miss Lorimer,* [GERALDINE *interrupts with* "*Impossible!*" *but* WRIGHTON *continues.*] — *who died a few months after the exposure. In America he would have been lynched!*" [*Offering her the letters.*] Now you see that I was right when I called the man in your presence a *liar!*

GERALDINE. No!

WRIGHTON. What?

MRS. WRIGHTON. Oh!

[*Together.*

GERALDINE. The proof that "*Count Kinsey*" is a scoundrel is overwhelming, yes! BUT there is absolutely not one word in all you've read to prove that Mr. Carlman and Count Kinsey are the same! In fact, in that letter *I* only hear proof that they are not the same!

[WRIGHTON *waits to continue. After a pause, he says to* GERALDINE, *who stands thinking:*

WRIGHTON. You'll not doubt Fräulein Handt's truthfulness?

[*He waits; there is no answer; he looks at* MRS. WRIGHTON.

MRS. WRIGHTON. Geraldine! [*Touching her.*] What is it? Do you hear us?

GERALDINE. Excuse me, yes; what were you saying?

WRIGHTON. Fräulein Handt is here to prove to you that Count Kinsey and Herr Carlman ARE *the same.*

GERALDINE. [*With feeling and much pathos, appealingly.*] No, no, Fräulein, you know you can't! I love him, Fräulein!

FRÄULEIN. [*Almost in tears.*] Ach! it iss the most sad day of my life. But it iss true vhen I saw Mr. Carlman on the boat I recognize him at once! and call him Count Kinsey. He asked of me how I know him, and I have made the explanation. I was governess mit his ungle vhat vas ambassador in London.

GERALDINE. But *he* — was he secretary there?

FRÄULEIN. Yes, he vas.

GERALDINE. [*Distressed, overexcited.*] You're sure? You know you might be mistaken, Fräulein

— it might be a resemblance. Don't you think it *was* — something like that?

FRÄULEIN. He said, yes, he vas der secretary, vhen I ask him on de boat.

WRIGHTON. Sh! [*To* FRÄULEIN.] Thank you, Fräulein.

FRÄULEIN. [*To* GERALDINE.] You will *forgif* me? You are *sure* I would gif the world for not to hurt you.

GERALDINE. Yes, Fräulein dear, I know; it's all right — good night.

FRÄULEIN. Good night.

[*She goes out.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. Dearest, dearest Geraldine.

[*Goes to her.*

GERALDINE. You don't understand me, either of you. — I appreciate your motives absolutely. I am grateful for the reasons that inspire

them; but you do not prove to me that the man I love is unworthy. I believe in him still; perhaps it is because I love him, I don't know. What I do know is his lips spoke truthfully to my ears, though you may think his kisses have coloured his words for me. When I looked into his eyes, they looked straight back into mine, and if I saw love in them, I saw truth too — and they never flinched, and when I gave him my hand, he took it in a strong grasp, and his hand felt honest. Believe me, a woman has an instinct about such things! I'd trust his hand to lead me anywhere.

[*The band begins to play.*

WRIGHTON. [*Strong.*] Then I must tell you the worst of all. Our consul in Budapesth has also given me the character of Count Kinsey.

GERALDINE. Is it the same as from London?

WRIGHTON. My dear child, in his own home it is much, much worse! [*Slowly, very seriously, but quietly.*] He has a wife and child in Budapesth!

KINSEY. [*Interrupts during the speech.*] No! Gott my witness! that iss not truth!

[*All turn, astonished to see him. They murmur their surprise as he begins to speak. As he finishes.*

GERALDINE. Herr Carlman!

MRS. WRIGHTON. Count Kinsey!

[*All together.*

WRIGHTON. You here! How dare you steal into this house!! [GERALDINE *interrupts with*, "*Mr. Wrighton!*"] You are even a lower scoundrel than I thought.

GERALDINE. [*Quickly, and interrupting.*] Don't! Don't!

[*Going to him.*

KINSEY. [*At the same time as* GERALDINE'S "*don't.*"] I am NOT one scoundrel! [*Pushing his way past the musicians and down between* GERALDINE *and* WRIGHTON.] I am not one scoundrel! And the man lie vhat call me so! Whoever he iss, he LIE!!

WRIGHTON. [*Very strong.*] I have proof of what I say, damning proof! from your own home!

KINSEY. Lies!! All of ett! That is vhat your proof isse!! Lies!!

GERALDINE. I knew it! I knew it!!

KINSEY. I have by me de true proof! true proof of all I say!

[*He tears open his jacket, and getting at papers from inside it, he offers them to* GERALDINE.

GERALDINE. [*Smiling, shakes her hand. To* WRIGHTON.] I don't need them.

[*Motions with her hand to* WRIGHTON. KINSEY

gives papers to WRIGHTON, *and at same time* MRS. WRIGHTON *dismisses musicians, who go out.* WRIGHTON *goes to lamp, at Right, to examine papers, and says,* "Janet." *His wife joins him as she leaves the musicians. Together they look over the papers.* KINSEY *and* GERALDINE *are before the bench Right.*

KINSEY. How can I tank you? No man in all ze world deserve such faith like zat!

GERALDINE. I only believed in you —

KINSEY. It iss all true vhat zey 'afe said —

[*Interrupted.*

GERALDINE. [*Interrupting quickly, looking straight into his eyes.*] No! I won't believe even you when you say it.

[*The band outside plays Hungarian song.*

KINSEY. You have not let me feenish, — it is all true of *mine broder!* He iss Count Kinsey,

I am Count *Carlos* Kinsey, younger as him, — Adolph, Count Kinsey. He was secretaire in London, and vhen he vas oblige to resign for a very bad reason, I hafe take his place for a leettle vhile. He did came over here ze ozer week after a American girl, but not a one like you — and — zat is all.

GERALDINE. *That* is ALL?

KINSEY. Oh, no! I 'afe went to ze consul to-day. To-morrow I appear wiz my true name I explain everyting to everybody! My company will be form! And ZEN! — [*He stops; a pause.*] — told you I would — me come back one day.

GERALDINE. WHEN?

KINSEY. To-morrow!

GERALDINE. But look! [*Pointing up where the sun is beginning to come through the glass roof.*] It IS to-morrow!!!

KINSEY. Yess! [*Smiling at her.*] And I have so very much to do zis day. I tink I ought to make ze hay, — how you say it?

GERALDINE. *While* ZE *sun shines?*

KINSEY. Yess.

[WRIGHTON *and* MRS. WRIGHTON *come forward.*

WRIGHTON. [*To* KINSEY, *with much depth of feeling.*] I beg your pardon.

[KINSEY *hesitates one moment, and then holds out his hand.* WRIGHTON *takes it, and* MRS. WRIGHTON *quickly places her hand on both of theirs, saying.*

MRS. WRIGHTON. And I too beg! Forgive us both!

KINSEY. I do!

MRS. WRIGHTON. [*To* WRIGHTON, *with a meaning look.*] Come! [*To* GERALDINE, *as she*

and WRIGHTON *start to go very quietly.*] We'll get our wraps.

[*They go out.*

[GERALDINE *and* KINSEY *are standing looking at each other and do not hear her.*

KINSEY. Geraldine, vill you be my vife?

GERALDINE. I will.

[*He takes her close in his arms as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

THE GIRL WITH THE GREEN EYES

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

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TO

CLARA BLOODGOOD

GOOD FRIEND AND IDEAL INTERPRETER
OF "JINNY"

THE GIRL WITH THE GREEN EYES

ACT I. THE TILLMANS' HOUSE, NEW YORK.
The Wedding.

(Two months elapse.)

ACT II. THE VATICAN, ROME.
The Honeymoon.

(Three weeks elapse.)

ACT III. THE AUSTINS' HOUSE, NEW YORK.
Home.

(The night passes.)

ACT IV. THE SAME.
SCENE I. *Dawn of the Next Day.*
SCENE II. *Early the Same Morning.*

THE PERSONS MORE OR LESS CONCERNED IN THE PLAY

"JINNY" AUSTIN.

MR. TILLMAN, MRS. TILLMAN } *Her Parents.*

GEOFFREY TILLMAN. *Her Brother.*

SUSIE. *Her Cousin.*

MISS RUTH CHESTER, MISS GRACE DANE, MISS BELLE WESTING, MISS GERTRUDE WOOD } *Her Bridesmaids.*

MAGGIE. *Maid at the Tillmans'.*

HOUSEMAID. *At the Tillmans'.*

BUTLER. *At the Tillmans'.*

FOOTMAN. *At the Tillmans'.*

JOHN AUSTIN.

MRS. CULLINGHAM.

PETER CULLINGHAM. *Her Son.*

MRS. LOPP.

CARRIE. *Her Daughter.*

A FRENCH COUPLE.

A GERMAN COUPLE.

A GUIDE.

A DRIVER.

A GROUP OF TOURISTS.

Originally produced under the management of Charles Frohman at the Savoy Theatre, New York, on the 25th of December, 1902, with the following cast:—

"Jinny" Austin	Miss Clara Bloodgood
Mr. Tillman	Mr. Charles Abbott
Mrs. Tillman	Mrs. Harriet Otis Dellenbaugh
Geoffrey Tillman	Mr. John M. Albaugh, Jr.
Susie	Miss Edith Taliaferro
Miss Ruth Chester	Miss Lucille Flaven
Miss Grace Dane	Miss Mary Blyth
Miss Belle Westing	Miss Helena Otis
Miss Gertrude Wood	Miss Felice Morris
Maggie	Miss Lucile Watson
Housemaid	Miss Angela Keir
Butler	Mr. Gardner Jenkins
Footman	Mr. Walter Dickinson
John Austin	Mr. Robert Drouet
Mrs. Cullingham	Mrs. McKee Rankin
Peter Cullingham	Mr. Harry E. Asmus
Mrs. Lopp	Miss Ellen Rowland
Carrie	Miss Clara B. Hunter
A French Couple	Mr. Henry De Barry Miss Louise Delmar
A German Couple	Mr. J. R. Cooley Miss Elsa Ganett
A Guide	Mr. Frank Brownlee
A Driver	Mr. Lou W. Carter
A Group of Tourists	Miss Elizabeth French Miss Gertrude Bindley Miss Myrtle Lane

ACT I

A charming room in the Tillmans' house. The walls are white woodwork, framing in old tapestries of deep foliage design, with here and there a flaming flamingo; white furniture with old, green brocade cushions. The room is in the purest Louis XVI. The noon sunlight streams through a window on the Left. On the opposite side is a door to the hall. At back double doors open into a corridor which leads to the ballroom. At Left Centre are double doors to the front hall. A great, luxurious sofa is at the left, with chairs sociably near it, and on the other side of the room a table has chairs

grouped about it. On floral small table are books and objets d'art, and everywhere there is a profusion of white roses and maidenhair fern.

In the stage directions Left and Right mean Left and Right of actor, as he faces audience.

Three smart-looking SERVANTS *are peering through the crack of the folding door, their backs to the audience. The pretty, slender* MAID *is on a chair. The elderly* BUTLER *dignifiedly stands on the floor. The plump, overfed little* HOUSEMAID *is kneeling so as to see beneath the head of the* BUTLER.

HOUSEMAID. [*Gasping.*] Oh, ain't it a beautiful sight!

BUTLER. [*Pompously.*] Not to me who 'ave seen a Lord married in Hengland.

MAGGIE. Oh, you make me sick, Mr. Potts, always talking of your English Aristocracy! I'm sure there never was no prettier wedding than this. Nor as pretty a bride as Miss Jinny.

BUTLER. [*Correcting her.*] Mrs. Haustin!

HOUSEMAID. She looks for all the world like one of them frosted angels on a Christmas card. My, I wish I could 'a' seen her go up the aisle with the organ going for all it was worth!

MAGGIE. It was a *beautiful* sight!

BUTLER. A good many 'appens to be 'aving the sense to be going now.

HOUSEMAID. Could you hear Miss Jinny say "I do," and make them other remarks?

MAGGIE. Yes, *plain*, though her voice was trembly like. But Mr. Austin he almost shouted!

[*Laughing nervously in excitement.*

BUTLER. 'E's glad to get 'er!

MAGGIE. *And her him!*

HOUSEMAID. Yes, that's what I likes about it. Did any one cry?

MAGGIE. Mrs. Tillman. Lots of people are going now.

HOUSEMAID. What elegant clothes! Oh, gosh!

BUTLER. [*Superciliously.*] Mrs. Cullingham don't seem in no 'urry; she's a common lot!

MAGGIE. I don't care, she's rich and Miss Jinny likes her; she just throws money around to any poor person or church or hospital that wants it, or *don't!* So she can't be so *very common* neither, Mr. Potts!

HOUSEMAID. Say, I catch on to something! Young Mr. Tillman's sweet on that there tall bridesmaid.

MAGGIE. [*Sharply.*] Who?

BUTLER. Miss Chester. I've seen there was something goin' hon between them whenever she's dined or lunched 'ere.

MAGGIE. [*Angry.*] 'Tain't true!

BUTLER. I'll bet my month's wages.

MAGGIE. I don't believe you!

BUTLER. Why, what's it to *you*, please?

MAGGIE. [*Saving herself.*] Nothing —

HOUSEMAID. Well, I guess it's truth enough. That's the second time I've seen him squeeze her hand when no one wasn't lookin'.

MAGGIE. Here, change places with me! [*Getting down from her chair.*] If you was a gentleman, Mr. Potts, you'd have given me *your place!*

[*Witheringly.*

BUTLER. If I was a *gentleman*, miss, I wouldn't be here; *I'd* be on the other side of the door.

[*He moves the chairs away*

MAGGIE. [*To Housemaid.*] Honest, you saw something between them?

HOUSEMAID. Who?

MAGGIE. Him and her? Mr. Geoffrey and Miss Chester —

HOUSEMAID. *Cheese it!* they're coming this way!

[*She and the* MAID *and the* BUTLER *vanish through the door Right.*

[GEOFFREY *and* RUTH *enter through the double doors quickly at back.* GEOFFREY *is a young, good-looking man, but with a weak face. He is of course very smartly dressed.* RUTH *is a very serenely beautiful girl, rather noble in type, but unconscious and unpretending in manner. They close the doors quickly behind them.*

GEOFFREY. We'll not be interrupted here, and

I must have a few words with you before you go.

[*He follows her to the sofa where she sits, and leans over it, with his arm about her shoulder.*

RUTH. Oh, Geof, — Geof, why weren't we married like this?

GEOFFREY. It couldn't be helped, darling!

RUTH. It isn't the big wedding I miss, oh, no, it's only it seemed sweeter in a church. Why did we have to steal off to Brooklyn, to that poor, strange little preacher in his stuffy back parlour, and behave as if we were doing something of which we were ashamed?

GEOFFREY. You love me, I love you, — isn't that the chief thing, dearest?

RUTH. But how much longer must we keep it secret?

GEOFFREY. Till I can straighten my affairs

out. I can't explain it all to you; there are terrible debts, — one more than all the others, — a debt I made when I was in college.

RUTH. If I could only help you! I have a *little* money.

GEOFFREY. No, I love you too much; besides, this debt isn't *money*, and I hope to get rid of it somehow before long.

RUTH. Forgive me for worrying you. It is only that every one is so happy at this wedding except me, — dear Jinny brimming over with joy, as I would be, — and it's made me feel — a little —

GEOFFREY. [*Comes around the sofa and sits beside her.*] I know, dear, and it's made me feel what a brute I am! Oh, if you knew how I hate myself for all I've done, and for the pain and trouble I cause you now!

[MAGGIE, *her sharp features set tense, appears in the doorway on the left behind the curtains and listens.*

RUTH. Never mind, we won't think of that any more.

GEOFFREY. I can never throw it off, not for a minute! I'm a worthless fellow and how can you love me —

RUTH. [*Interrupting him.*] I *do!* You are worth everything to me, and you will be worth much to the world yet!

GEOFFREY. I love you, Ruth — that's the one claim I can make to deserve you. But it's helped me to give up *all* the beastly pleasures I used to indulge in!

RUTH. [*Softly.*] Geof!

GEOFFREY. Which I used to think the only things worth living for, and which now, thanks to you, I loathe, — every one of them.

RUTH. I'm so glad! I've been some help, then.

GEOFFREY. If I'd only got you earlier, I'd have been a different man, Ruth!

RUTH. [*Smiling and taking his nervous hand in hers.*] Then I mightn't have fallen in love with you if you were a *different* man!

GEOFFREY. Dear girl! Anyway, this is the good news that I want to tell you — I hope now to have things settled in a couple of weeks.

RUTH. [*In glad relief.*] Geoffrey!

GEOFFREY. But — I mayn't be successful; it might be, Ruth — it might be, we would have to wait — for years —

RUTH. [*Quietly.*] I don't think I could bear that! It's not easy for me to lie and deceive as I've had to the last few months; I don't think I could keep it up.

[PETER CULLINGHAM *enters suddenly, from the ballroom, a pale young man, but, unlike* GEOFFREY, *hard and virile.*

PETER. Oh, here you are! I say, are you two spoony? Just the way *I* feel! [*Laughing.*] I caught and hugged old Mrs. Parmby just now! I think it's sort of in the air at weddings, don't you?

GEOFFREY. [*Rising.*] I'm surprised to see you've left the refreshment table, Peter.

PETER. They sent me to find Miss Chester — they're going to cut the bridesmaid's cake, and if you two really are spoony, Miss Chester, you'd better not miss it — you might get the ring!

[*They laugh as* PETER *takes out a bottle from which he takes a round, black tablet which he puts in his mouth.*

RUTH. [*Also rising.*] I'd better go.

[PETER *is making frantic efforts to swallow the tablet.*

GEOFFREY. [*Noticing him.*] What's the matter with you?

PETER. O dear! I've eaten so many ices and fancy cakes, I've got awful indigestion, and I'm trying to swallow a charcoal tablet.

RUTH. Come with me and get a glass of water.

PETER. No, it's very bad to drink water with your meals; but I'll get a piece of bridesmaid's cake — that'll push it down!

[PETER *and* RUTH *go out through the double doors.*

[*The moment they are out of the room,* MAGGIE *comes from behind the curtain and goes straight up to* GEOFFREY. *He looks astonished and frightened.*

GEOFFREY. What do you want? Have you been listening?

MAGGIE. So that's it, is it? You want to marry her when you can get rid of me.

GEOFFREY. [*With relief.*] What do you mean?

MAGGIE. Oh, I may not have heard everything, but I heard and saw enough to catch on that you're in love with Miss Chester.

GEOFFREY. Well?

MAGGIE. Well, you won't marry her — I'll never set you free.

GEOFFREY. Sh!

[*Looking about and closing the doors.*

MAGGIE. Oh, they're all in the dining room.

GEOFFREY. [*Angry.*] What do you want, anyway?

MAGGIE. [*She pleads a little.*] When I came here to your house and got a position, it was because I *loved* you, if you *had* treated me bad, and I hoped by seeing you again, and being near

you, you might come back to me and everything be made straight!

GEOFFREY. Never! Never! It's impossible.

MAGGIE. [*Angry again.*] Oh, is it! Well, the dirty little money you give me now only holds my tongue quiet so long's you behave yourself and don't run after any other girls! But the minute you try to throw me down, I'll come out with the whole story.

GEOFFREY. I was drunk when I married you!

MAGGIE. More shame to you!

GEOFFREY. You're right. But I was only twenty — and you — led me on —

MAGGIE. [*Interrupting him.*] Me! led you on! *me*, as decent and nice a girl as there was in New Haven if I do do housework, and that's my wedding ring and you put it there, and mother's got the certificate locked up good and safe in her

box with my dead baby sister's hair and the silver plate off my father's coffin!

GEOFFREY. We mustn't talk here any more!

MAGGIE. You look out! If I wasn't so fond of your sister Miss Jinny, and if the old people weren't so good to me, I'd just show you right up *here — now!*

GEOFFREY. I'll *buy* you off if I can't divorce you!

MAGGIE. *You!* Poof!

[GIRLS' *voices are heard from the ballroom.*

GEOFFREY. Look out — some one's coming!

MAGGIE. [*Going.*] You haven't got a red cent; my cheque's always one of your *father's!*

[*She goes out Right.*

GEOFFREY. Good God! what am I going to do — shoot myself, if I don't get out of this soon — I must get some air!

[*He goes out Left.*

[JINNY *opens the double doors, looks in, and then enters. She is an adorable little human being, pretty, high-strung, temperamental, full of certain feminine fascination that defies analysis, which is partly due to the few faults she possesses. She is, of course, dressed in the conventional wedding-dress, a tulle veil thrown over her face.*

JINNY. Not a soul! Come on!

[*She is followed in by the four* BRIDESMAIDS — *nice girls every one of them — and also, very slyly, by* SUSIE, *a very modern spoiled child, who sits unobserved out of the way at the back.*

Now, my dears, I wish to say good-by all by ourselves so I can make you a little speech! [*All laugh gently.*] In the first place I want to tell you that there's nothing like marriage! And

you must every one of you try it! Really, I was never so happy in my life!

GRACE. Must we stand, or may we sit down?

JINNY. Oh, stand; it won't be long and you'll only crush your lovely frocks. In fact, I advise you not to lose any time sitting down again until you've got the happy day fixed!

RUTH. You know, Jinny darling, that there is no one so glad for your happiness as your four bridesmaids are — isn't that so, girls?

ALL. Yes!

[*And they all together embrace* JINNY, *saying*, "Dear old Jinny," "Darling Jinny," "We'll miss you dreadfully," *etc.*, *ad lib.*, *till they get tearful.*

JINNY. Good gracious, girls, we mustn't cry. I'll get red eyes, and Jack'll think what an awful

difference just the marriage service makes in a woman.

[*The doors at the back open, and* AUSTIN *appears in the doorway.*

[AUSTIN *is a typical New Yorker in appearance, thirty-two years old, good-looking, manly, self-poised, and somewhat phlegmatic in temperament.*

AUSTIN. Hello! May a mere man come in to this delectable tea party?

JINNY. *No*, Jack! But *wait*—by the door till I call you!

AUSTIN. [*Amused.*] Thank you!

[*He goes out, closing the door.*

GERTRUDE. We'll miss you so awfully, Jinny.

JINNY. Just what I say! Get a man to keep you company, and then you won't miss any one.

BELLE. Yes, but attractive men with lots of money don't come into the Grand Central Station by every train!

JINNY. [*Putting her arm about her.*] You want too much, my dear Belle! And you aren't watching the Grand Central Station either half so much as you are the steamer docks for a suitable person. Now don't be angry; you know you want a good big title, and you've got the money to pay, but, my dear Belle, it's those ideas of yours that have kept you single till — twenty-six! — now *that* you must confess was nice of me, to take off *three* years!

BELLE. [*Laughing.*] Jinny, you're horrid!

JINNY. No, I'm not! You know I'm *really* fond of you, or you wouldn't be my bridesmaid to-day; it's only that I want *your wedding* to be as happy as *mine* — that's all, and here's a little gift

for you to remember your disagreeable but loving friend by! [*Giving her a small jewelry box.*

BELLE. Thank you, Jinny! Thank you!

[*A little moved.*

GRACE. Mercy! I hope you're not going to take each one of us!

JINNY. I am, and come here, *you're* next!

GRACE. I'll swear I don't want to get married at all!

JINNY. Don't be silly, you *icicle!* Of course you don't; you freeze all the men away, so that you've no idea how nice and comfy they can be! My advice to you, Grace darling, — and I *love* you, or I wouldn't bother, — is to *thaw!* [*Laughs.*] I used to be awfully jealous of you —

GRACE. [*Interrupting.*] Oh!

JINNY. Yes, I was! You're lots prettier than I am.

GRACE. Jinny!

JINNY. You *are!* But I got over it because I soon saw you were so cold, there was no danger of any conflagration near you! Oh, I've watched your *eyes* often to see if any man had lighted the fires in them yet. And now I'm determined they shall be lighted. You're too *cold!* Thaw, dear, — not to *everybody*, — that would be like slushy weather, but don't keep yourself so continually so far below zero that you won't have time to strike — well — say eighty-five in *the shade*, when the right bit of masculine sunshine *does* come along! Here — with my best love!

[*Giving her a small jewelry box.*

[GRACE *kisses* JINNY.

GERTRUDE. I am the next *victim*, I believe!

JINNY. All I've got to say to *you*, Miss, is, that if you don't decide pretty soon on *one* of the

half dozen men you are flirting with *disgracefully* at present, they'll every one find you out and you'll have to go in for widowers.

GERTRUDE. [*Mockingly.*] Horrors!

JINNY. Oh, I don't know! I suppose a widower is sort of *broken in* and would be more likely to put up with your caprices! For the sake of your charm and wit and true heart underneath it all, you dear old girl you!

[*Giving her a small jewel box.*

GERTRUDE. Thank you, Jinny. I'm only afraid I will do the wrong thing with you away! You know you're always my ballast!

JINNY. Nonsense! Female ballast is no good; masculine ballast is the only kind that's safe if you want to make life's journey in a love balloon. [SHE *turns to* RUTH CHESTER.] Ruth — the trouble with you is, you're too sad lately, and

show such a lack of interest. I should think you might be in love, only I haven't been able to find the man. Anyway, if you aren't in love, you must *pretend* an interest in things. Of course, men's affairs are awfully dull, but they don't like you to talk about them, so it's really very easy. All you have to do is listen, stare them straight in the eyes, think of whatever you like, and look pleased! It *does* flatter them, and they think *they* are *interesting*, and you *charming!* Wear this, and think of me! [*Giving her a box.*] and be happy! I *want* you to be *happy* — and I can see you aren't!

RUTH. [*Kissing her.*] Thank you, dear!

JINNY. There, that's all! — except — when I come home from abroad in October, if every one of you aren't engaged to be married, I'll wash my hands of you — [*They all laugh*

[SUSIE, *sliding off her chair at back, comes forward.*

SUSIE. Now, it's my turn! You can't chuck me!

JINNY. [*Trying not to laugh.*] Susie! where did you come from and *what do* you mean?

SUSIE. Oh, you give me a pain! — I went up the aisle with you to-day, too — what's the matter with telling me how to get married!

JINNY. I'll tell you this, your language is dreadful; where do you get all the boy's slang? You don't talk like a lady.

SUSIE. I'm not a lady. I'm a little girl!

JINNY. You *talk* much more like a common boy.

SUSIE. Well, I'd rather *be* a *boy!*

JINNY. Susie, I shall tell Aunt Laura her daughter needs looking after.

SUSIE. Oh, very well, cousin Jinny. If you're going to make trouble, why, forget it!

[*Turns and goes out haughtily, Right.*

JINNY. [*Going to the double doors, calls.*] Now you can come in, Jack.

[AUSTIN *enters.*

AUSTIN. And now I've only time to say good-by. All your guests have gone except the Cullinghams, who are upstairs with your mother, looking at the presents.

GERTRUDE. Come! All hands around him!

[*The five* GIRLS *join hands, with* AUSTIN *in the centre.*

BELLE. We don't care if every one else has gone or not, *we're* here yet!

AUSTIN. So I see! But I am ordered by my father-in-law — ahem! [*all laugh*] — to go to my room, or he thinks there will be danger of our losing our train.

ALL THE BRIDESMAIDS. [*Ad lib.*] Where are you going? Where are you going? We won't let you out till you tell us.

AUSTIN. I daren't — I'm afraid of my wife!

JINNY. Bravo, Jack!

GRACE. Very well, then, we'll let you out, on *one* condition, that you kiss us all in turn.

[*The* GIRLS *laugh.*

JINNY. No! No! [*Breaking away.*] He shan't do any such thing!

[*They all laugh and break up the ring.*

GERTRUDE. Dear me, isn't she jealous!

BELLE. Yes, it is evidently time we all went! Good-by, Jinny! [*Kissing her.*] A happy journey to *Washington!*

JINNY. No, it isn't!

[*General good-bys.* JINNY *begins with* RUTH *at one end, and* AUSTIN *at the other; he*

says good-by and shakes hands with each girl.

GERTRUDE. [*Kissing* JINNY.] Good-by, and a pleasant trip to *Niagara Falls!*

JINNY. Not a bit!

GRACE. [*Kissing* JINNY.] Good-by, I believe it's *Boston* or *Chicago!*

JINNY. *Neither!*

RUTH. Good-by, dear, and all the happiness in the world!

[*Kisses her.*

JINNY. Thank you.

[*She turns and goes with the other three girls to the double doors at back, where they are heard talking.*

RUTH. Mr. Austin?

AUSTIN. Yes?

[*Joining her.*

RUTH. [*Embarrassed.*] You like your new brother, *don't* you?

AUSTIN. Geoff? most certainly I do, and Jinny adores him.

RUTH. I know, then, you'll be a good friend to him if he needs one.

AUSTIN. Surely I will.

RUTH. I think he does need one.

AUSTIN. Really —

[*The* GIRLS *are passing out through the doors.*

BELLE. Come along, Ruth.

[THEY *pass out and* JINNY *stands in the doorway talking to them till they are out of hearing.*

RUTH. Sh! please don't tell any one, not even Jinny, what I've said! I may be betraying something I've no right to do, and don't tell *him* I've spoken to you.

AUSTIN All right!

[JINNY *turns around in the doorway.*

RUTH. Thank you — and good-by.

[*Shaking his hand again.*

[JINNY *notices that they shake hands twice. A queer little look comes into her face.*

AUSTIN. Good-by.

RUTH. Have they gone? — Oh! [*Hurrying past* JINNY.] Good-by, dear.

[*She goes out through the double doors.*

JINNY. [*In a curious little voice.*] Good-by . . . [*She comes slowly down the room toward* AUSTIN, *and smiles at him quizzically.*] What were you two saying?

AUSTIN. Good-by!

JINNY. But you'd said it once to her already! Why did you have to say good-by *twice* to *Ruth?* Once was enough for all the other girls!

AUSTIN. [*Banteringly.*] The first time *I* said

good-by to *her*, and the second time *she* said good-by to *me!*

JINNY. Do you know what I believe — *Ruth Chester's in love with you!*

AUSTIN. Oh, darling!

[*Laughs.*

JINNY. Yes, that explains the whole thing. No wonder she was *triste* to-day.

AUSTIN. [*Laughing.*] Jinny, sweetheart, don't get such an absurd notion into your head.

JINNY. [*Looks straight at him a moment, then speaks tenderly.*] No — no — I know it's not your fault. There was no other woman in this house for you to-day but *me*, *was* there?

AUSTIN. There was no other woman in the world for me since the first week I knew you.

[*Taking her into his arms.*

JINNY. This is good-by to *Jinny Tillman!*

[*He kisses her.*

Jack, darling, do you think I could sit on your knee like a little child and put my arm around your neck and rest my head on your shoulder for just five seconds — I'm *so tired!*

[MRS. CULLINGHAM *opens the door.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh!

[*Shuts the door very quickly and knocks.*

[JINNY *and* AUSTIN *laugh.*

JINNY. Yes, yes — come in!

[MRS. CULLINGHAM *enters. She is a handsome, whole-souled, florid woman; one of those creatures of inexhaustible vitality who make people of a nervous temperament tired almost on contact by sheer contrast. She is the kindest, best meaning creature in the world.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, do excuse me! I haven't any more tact! — and I hate to inter-

rupt you, but I must say good-by. [*Calls.*] Peter!

PETER. Yes'm.

[*Entering with a glass of water and a powder. He sits in the arm-chair at right, and constantly looks at his watch.*

AUSTIN. I'm much obliged to you, Mrs. Cullingham, for the interruption, as I was sent long ago to make myself ready for the train, if you'll excuse me!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Certainly!

JINNY. Good-by!

[*Taking his hand as he passes her.*

AUSTIN. Good-by!

[*He goes out Right.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. If it's time for *him*, it's certainly time for *you*. I won't keep you a minute!

JINNY. No, really we've plenty of time, — [*both sit on sofa.*] Wasn't it a lovely wedding!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I never saw a sweeter, my dear! And it was perfectly elegant! Simply great!

JINNY. And isn't Jack —

MRS. CULLINGHAM. He is! And so are you! In fact I've been telling your mother I don't know how to thank you both. You've asked me to-day to meet the swellest crowd I've ever been in where I was *invited*, and didn't have to buy tickets, and felt I had a right to say something besides "excuse me," and "I beg your pardon." Of course, I've sat next to them all before in restaurants and at concerts, but this time I felt like the real thing myself, and I shall never forget it! If you or your husband ever want any mining tips, come to me; what my

husband don't know about mines isn't worth knowing!

JINNY. I'm as glad as I can be if you've had a good time, and you mustn't feel indebted to us. Ever since we met in Egypt that winter, mamma and I have always felt you were one of our best friends.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Of course you know it isn't for *my own* sake I'm doing these stunts to get into Society. It's all for *my boy*. He's *got* to have the best — or the *worst*, however you look at it! [*Laughing.*] Anyway, I want him to have a chance at it, and it belongs to him through his father, for my first husband was a real swell!

[*Looking at* PETER *lovingly.*

[*At this moment*, PETER, *having again looked at his watch, tips up the powder on his tongue, and swallows it down with the water.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Poor darling! He suffers terribly from indigestion. That's an alkali powder he takes twenty minutes after eating. Peter, we must say good-by now.

PETER. [*Coming up.*] Good-by, Miss Jinny.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. *Mrs. Austin!*

JINNY. Oh, I'll always be "Miss Jinny" to Peter!

PETER. Thank you! We've had a great time at your wedding! *Bully food!* But I'm *feeling* it! [*He turns aside.*] Excuse me!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I was just telling Mrs. Austin —

[*Interrupted.*

JINNY. "Jinny" — don't change.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Thank you — [*Rises to go.*] I was just saying we won't forget in our social life, will we, Peter, that Miss

Jinny gave us the biggest boost up we've had yet?

[JINNY *also rises.*

PETER. Well, you know, mother, I don't think the game's worth the candle. It's begun to pall on me already.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I really think he's going to be superior to it!

PETER. I only go now for your sake.

[MRS. TILLMAN, *coming from Right, speaks off stage.*

MRS. TILLMAN. Jinny! Jinny!

JINNY. Mother!

[MRS. TILLMAN *enters.*

JINNY. I ought to dress?

MRS. TILLMAN. [*To* MRS. CULLINGHAM.] She'll be late if she isn't careful.

JINNY. I'm going to. Is Maggie there?

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, waiting!

JINNY. Good-by. [*Kisses* MRS. CULLINGHAM.] Good-by. [*Shakes* PETER'S *hand.*]

PETER. Many happy returns!

[JINNY *goes out Right.*

MRS. TILLMAN. Come, I want to give you some of Jinny's flowers to take home with you. Would you like some?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I should love them!

[*They go out through the doors at back.*

[PETER *is suffering with indigestion. He takes a charcoal tablet, and* SUSIE *cautiously enters Right.*

SUSIE. There you are! Have you got 'em?

PETER. No, I gave them back to you.

SUSIE. Then they're in there on the table — get 'em quick, the trunks are coming down now!

[PETER *goes out quickly at back, as the*

BUTLER *and* MAN SERVANT *enter Right, carrying a large new trunk with a portmanteau on top of it.*

SUSIE. Put them right over there for a minute. [*They put them down in the centre of the room, and the* FOOTMAN *goes out Right.*] And mind, you don't split on us, Thomas. Auntie Tillman knows all about it — it's just to be a nice little surprise for Cousin Jinny and my new uncle.

BUTLER. Very well, miss.

[*He also goes out Right.*

[*At the same time* PETER *reënters at back with a roll of papers and some broad white satin ribbon. The papers are about half a foot broad and two feet long, and on them is printed,* "*We are on our honeymoon.*"

PETER. [*With gay excitement.*] I've got 'em.

SUSIE. Get some water — there's sticky stuff on the back!

[PETER *gives her the papers and ribbons and goes out again at back.*

SUSIE. Quick! [*Ties a big white bow on the portmanteau and on a trunk handle.*] If Auntie Tillman sees 'em, I'll bet she'll grab 'em off. She'll be as mad as *hops!*

[*The* BUTLER *and* FOOTMAN *reënter Right, and bring down an old steamer trunk and a gentleman's dressing-bag.*

BUTLER. [*To the* FOOTMAN.] Go and see if the carriage is there!

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

[*He goes out Left.*

[*As* PETER *reënters from the back, with the water.*

SUSIE Quick now! Quick!

[*They stick one label on the big steamer trunk facing the audience.*

PETER. I say isn't that great!

[SUSIE *giggles aloud with delight. The* BUTLER, *standing at one side, smiles. They put another label on the other trunk.*

SUSIE. [*Giggling.*] I heard them plan it, — they're taking one old trunk purposely so as people would not catch on they were just married!

[*Giggles delightedly.*

[*The* FOOTMAN *reënters with a driver, Left.*

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir, it's here.

BUTLER. [*To the driver.*] You can take that first.

[*Pointing to the steamer trunk.*

[DRIVER *goes out Left with it on his shoulder, and the portmanteau.*

BUTLER. Now, James, you're to go over with

the luggage to Twenty-third Street Ferry and check the heavy baggage; you know where to.

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

SUSIE. [*Eagerly.*] Oh, *where to?*

BUTLER. I am hunder hoath not to tell, Miss.

SUSIE. O pish!

[*Kneeling in the big arm-chair and watching proceedings from behind its back.*

BUTLER. [*Continues to the* FOOTMAN.] And wait with the checks and Mr. Austin's dressing-bag — [*Showing it.*] — until they come.

FOOTMAN. Yes, sir.

PETER. And make haste, or, I say, somebody'll turn up and give our whole joke away!

[*The* DRIVER *reënters*

SUSIE. Yes, *do* hurry!

FOOTMAN. [*To the* DRIVER.] Come along.

[*They take the big trunk out Left.* BUTLER *follows with the dressing-bag.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Calls from the room at back.*] Peter darling, are you there?

SUSIE. Phew! Just in time!

[*Sliding down into a more correct position in the chair.*

PETER. Yes, mother!

[*Going to back.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*In the doorway, at back.*] Come, take these beautiful roses from Mrs. Tillman!

[MRS. CULLINGHAM *and* MRS. TILLMAN *enter.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*With her arms full of roses.*] Thomas will take them down.

PETER. No, I'd like to. Aren't they bully?

[*He takes them.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*To* MRS. TILLMAN.]

Good-by, and thank you again. I know you must want to go up to Jinny.

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, she may need me to help her a little. Good-by. Good-by, Peter.

PETER. Good-by, ma'm.

[MRS. TILLMAN *goes out Right.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Why, Susie, how do you do?

SUSIE. [*Glides out of the chair and stands before it.*] How do you do?

[*Embarrassed.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. You're a good little girl, I hope?

SUSIE. I don't! I hate good little girls!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. O my!

[*She goes out, laughing, Left.*

[PETER, *coming to* SUSIE, *catches her in his arms and kisses her, much against her will.*

SUSIE. [*Furious.*] Oh, you horrid, nasty thing,

you! [*She strikes at him; he runs; she chases him from one side of the room to the other, around a sofa and table, and out Left, screaming as she chases him.*] I hate you! I hate you!

[MAGGIE *enters Right.*

MAGGIE. Miss Susie, Mrs. Tillman wants to see you upstairs.

SUSIE. What for?

MAGGIE. I don't know, Miss.

SUSIE. Pshaw! have I got to go? All right!

[*Going toward the door at Right.*

[AUSTIN *enters, meeting* SUSIE.

AUSTIN. Hello! Where are *you* going?

SUSIE. Oh, up to Auntie Tillman's room. Goodness knows what for; it's an awful bore! Want to come along?

AUSTIN. No, thank you; but if you see your Cousin Jinny, you might tell her I am down.

SUSIE. [*Hanging on to him.*] I say! Where are you and Cousin Jinny going to, anyway?

AUSTIN. [*Smiling.*] I don't know.

SUSIE. O my, what a fib! And that's a nice example to set a little girl!

[*She goes out Right.*

MAGGIE. [*Coming forward.*] I beg pardon, sir, but may I speak to you a minute?

AUSTIN. Certainly, Maggie, what is it?

MAGGIE. I've been trying for a chance to see you alone. I wouldn't bother you, sir — but it's only because I'm fond of Miss Jinny, and of Mr. and Mrs. Tillman, and they've all been so good to me; I know it would nearly kill 'em if they knew.

AUSTIN. Come, Maggie, knew what?

MAGGIE. Well, *one member* of this family ain't been good to me, sir. [*From this point her feelings*

begin to get the better of her and she speaks rapidly and hysterically.] He's been bad, bad as he could, and somebody's got to talk to him, and I don't see who's a-goin' to do it but you. If he don't change, I'll not hold my tongue any longer. It's all I can do for their sakes to hold it now!

AUSTIN. Look here, what are you talking about? You don't mean Mr. Geoffrey?

MAGGIE. Yes, I do, sir; he's my husband.

AUSTIN. What!!

MAGGIE. We was married when he was at Yale, sir; I was in a shop there.

AUSTIN. But —! Well, after all, isn't this your and Geoffrey's affair? Why bring me in?

MAGGIE. Because he's making love to Miss Chester, and promising to marry *her* now, and if he don't stop — I'll make trouble!

AUSTIN. But if he's married to you, as you say — he can't marry — any one else.

MAGGIE. He's tried to make me believe our marriage ain't legal, because he was only twenty and he'd been drinking!

AUSTIN. What makes you think Mr. Geoffrey cares for — Miss Chester?

MAGGIE. I just heard and see him making love to her *here!*

AUSTIN. This is a pretty bad story, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes, sir, and the worst is, sir, I know I ain't good enough for him, and that's why I've kept still about it these three years, but I can't help loving him no matter how ugly he's treated me. [*Breaking down into tears.*] I just can't help it! I *love* him, sir, even if I'm only a servant girl, and I can't stand it thinking he's going to try and get rid of me for some one else!

[*She sobs out loud.*

AUSTIN. Sh! — Maggie. Sit down a minute, and control yourself. Somebody'll hear you, and besides they'll be coming down presently. I'll have a talk with Mr. Geoffrey when I come back —

[*Interrupted as* GEOFFREY *enters Left. He doesn't see* MAGGIE, *who is collapsed in a corner of the sofa.*

GEOFFREY. [*To* AUSTIN.] Ah! Thank goodness I've caught you; I had an awful headache and went out for a breath of air, and then I was afraid I might have missed you! I knew in that case Jinny would never forgive me, nor — I — myself — for that — matter —

[*His voice grows less exuberant in the middle of his speech and finally at the end almost dies away, as he sees the expression in* AUSTIN'S *face and realizes that something is wrong*

somewhere. When he stops speaking, MAGGIE *gives a gasping sob. He hears it, and starting, sees her.*

GEOFFREY. Maggie!

AUSTIN. Geoffrey, is what this girl says true?

GEOFFREY. That I married her in New Haven? Yes.

MAGGIE. [*Rises.*] I'll go, please, I'd rather go.

AUSTIN. Yes, go, Maggie; it's better.

[MAGGIE *goes out Right.*

GEOFFREY. [*As soon as she is out of the room.*] Promise me, Jack, you won't tell any one! It's awful, I know! For two years at college I went all to pieces and led a rotten life, — and one night, drunk, I married her, and it isn't so much her fault. I suppose she thought I loved her, — but this would break up the old lady and gentleman so, if they knew, I couldn't stand it! And

Jinny, for God's sake, don't tell Jinny. *She respects me.* You won't tell her, will you?

AUSTIN. No. But Maggie says you want to marry some one else now.

GEOFFREY. [*With a change, in great shame.*] That's true, too.

[*He sits in utter dejection on the sofa.*

AUSTIN. How are you going to do it?

GEOFFREY. I must make money somehow and buy off Maggie.

AUSTIN. Yes, go out to Sioux Falls, get a divorce there on respectable grounds, and settle a sum of money on Maggie.

GEOFFREY. But I can't do that!

AUSTIN. Why not?

GEOFFREY. I can't do anything that would give publicity, and that divorce would.

AUSTIN. Any divorce would; you can't get rid of that.

GEOFFREY. I tell you I can't have publicity. Ruth — Miss Chester — would hear of it.

AUSTIN. Well, if she loves you, she'll forgive your wild oats, especially as every one sees now what a steady, straight fellow you've become.

GEOFFREY. It's Ruth! But I can't do that No, Jack, you must help — you will, won't you? Oh, *do*, for Jinny's sake! Help me to persuade Maggie to keep silent for good, tear up that certificate of marriage. I was only twenty; it's hardly legal, and I'll settle a good sum —

[*Interrupted.*

AUSTIN. [*Going straight to him, puts his hand heavily on his shoulder.*] Good God, you're proposing bigamy! You've done enough; don't stoop to *crime!*

[*The two* MEN *face each other a moment.* GEOFFREY'S *head drops.*

AUSTIN. Forget you ever said that; do what I tell you when Jinny and I have gone abroad, so she will be away from it a little, and if you want money, let me know.

[JINNY *enters Right, with nervous gaiety, covering an upheaving emotion which is very near the surface.*

JINNY. Ready! And there *you* are, Geof. I've been sending all over the house after you! Good-by! [*Throwing her arms about him.*] Dear old Geof! Haven't we had good times together! Always, always from the youngest days I can remember—I don't believe there were ever a brother and sister so sympathetic; I know there was never a brother such a perfect darling as you were—I'll miss you, Geof! [*The tears come into her voice, anyway.*] I used to think I'd never marry at all if I couldn't marry *you*, and I *do* think *he* is the

only man in the world who could have taken me away from home, so long as you were there! [*To* AUSTIN, *smiling.*] You aren't jealous?

AUSTIN. No!

JINNY. [*In jest.*] Isn't it awful! You can't *make* him jealous! I think it's a positive flaw in his character! Not like — *us*, is he?

GEOFFREY. Dear old girl —

JINNY. [*Whispers to him.*] And I've noticed how you've overcome certain things, dear Geof. I know it's been *hard*, and I'm proud of you.

GEOFFREY. Sh! Jinny, dear old sister! I'll miss *you!* By George, Jin, the house'll be awful without — but you — [*His voice grows husky.*] — just excuse me a minute!

[*He is about to break down, and so hurries out Right.*

JINNY. [*Sniffling.*] He was going to cry! Oh,

Jack, you'll be a brother to Geoffrey, won't you? You know he's been awfully dissipated, and he's changed it all, all by himself! *If he should go wrong again* — I believe it would break my heart, I love him so!

AUSTIN. I'll do *more* for him, if he ever needs me, than if he were *my own* brother, because he's *yours!*

JINNY. [*Presses his hand and looks up at him lovingly and gratefully.*] Thank you. Wait here just a minute; I know he won't come back to say good-by. He's gone up to his room, I'm sure — I'll just surprise him with a hug and my hands over his eyes like we used to do years ago.

[*She starts to go out Right, and meets* MR. *and* MRS. TILLMAN, *who enter.*

TILLMAN. The carriage is here!

JINNY. I won't be a second —

[*She goes out Right.*

MRS. TILLMAN. Where has she gone?

AUSTIN. Up to her brother.

MRS. TILLMAN. Her father's been locked up in his study for three hours — he *says* thinking, but to *me* his eyes look very suspicious!

[*Taking her husband's arm affectionately.*

TILLMAN. [*Clears his throat.*] Nonsense!

MRS. TILLMAN. Well, *how many cigars did you smoke?*

TILLMAN. Eight.

MRS. TILLMAN. The amount of emotion that a man can soak out of himself with tobacco is wonderful! He uses it just like a sponge!

TILLMAN. Jack, the first thing I asked about you when I heard that — er — that things were getting this way was, does he smoke? A man who smokes has always that outlet. If things

go wrong — go out and smoke a cigar, and when the cigar's *finished*, ten to one everything's got right, somehow! If you lose your temper, don't speak! — a cigar, and when it's finished, then speak! You'll find the temper all gone up in the smoke! A woman's happiness is safest with a man who smokes. [*He clears his throat, which is filling.*] God bless you, Jack, it *is* a wrench; our only girl, you know. She's been a great joy — ahem!

[*He quickly gets out a cigar.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Stopping him from smoking.*] No, no, dear, they're *going now!*

TILLMAN. Well, the best I can say is, I wish you as happy a married life as her mother and I have had.

MRS. TILLMAN. Thirty-five *dear* years! But now, George, let me say a word — you always have

monopolized our new son — he'll be much fonder of you than *me!*

TILLMAN. Old lady! — Jealous! —

MRS. TILLMAN. Turn about is fair play — you're jealous still of Jinny and me. [*She pauses a moment.*] I think we'd better tell him!

TILLMAN. All right. The only rifts in our lute, Jack, have been little threads of jealousy that have snapped sometimes!

MRS. TILLMAN. Nothing ever serious — of course, *but* it's a fault that Jinny shares with us, and the *only fault* we've ever been able to find.

TILLMAN. We called her for years the girl with the green eyes. She goes it pretty *strong* sometimes!

AUSTIN. Oh, that's all right — I shall *like* it!

MRS. TILLMAN. You'll always bear with her, won't you, if she should ever get jealous of you?

AUSTIN. Of *me?* I'll never give *her the chance.*

MRS. TILLMAN. It isn't a question of chance; you just can't help it sometimes, can you, George?

TILLMAN. No, you can't.

MRS. TILLMAN. And so —

AUSTIN. Don't worry! Your daughter's safe with me. I'm not the jealous sort myself and I love Jinny so completely, so calmly, and yet with my heart, and soul, and mind, and body, she'll never have a *chance* even to *try* to be jealous of *me!*

TILLMAN. Sh!

[JINNY *enters Right.*

JINNY. I found poor Maggie up in my room crying! She says she can't bear to have me go away. I think she's sorry now she wouldn't come with me as maid — and I said good-by to cook and she sniffed!

[AUSTIN *looks at his watch.*

AUSTIN. Oh! we ought to go!

MRS. TILLMAN. Good-by, darling!

[*Kissing* JINNY *and embracing her a long time, while* AUSTIN *and* TILLMAN *shake hands warmly and say good-by.*

JINNY. [*Going to her father.*] Good-by, father. Dear old father!

[*With happy emotion.*

[AUSTIN *meanwhile is shaking hands with* MRS. TILLMAN.

JINNY. [*Returns to her mother.*] Darling — oh, how good you've always been to me! Oh, mummy darling, I *shall* miss you! You'll send me a letter to-morrow, won't you, or a telegram? Send a telegram — you've got the address!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*With tears in her eyes.*] Yes, it's written down!

JINNY. You can tell father, but no one else!

[*Hugs and kisses her mother.*

TILLMAN. Come, Susan! They'll lose their train!

[JINNY *again embraces her father.*

ALL. Good-by! Good-by!

[JINNY, *starting to go with* AUSTIN, *suddenly leaves him and runs back again to her mother and throws herself in her arms. They embrace, in tears.*

JINNY. Good-by, mother!

MRS. TILLMAN. Good-by, my darling!

TILLMAN. Come, come! they'll lose their train!

[JINNY *runs to* AUSTIN, *and with his arms about her, they hurry to the door Left. They go through the doors at back to window in the corridor.* JINNY *stops at the door and she and* AUSTIN *face each other a moment.*

JINNY. [*Looking up at him.*] Oh, Jack!

[*She throws her arms about his neck and buries her face on his shoulder.*

AUSTIN. Jinny, Jinny dear, you're not sorry?

JINNY. [*Slowly raises her head and looks at him, smiling through her tears, and speaks in a voice full of tears and little sobs.*] Sorry? Oh, no! Oh, no! It hurts me to leave them, but I never was so *happy* in my life!

[*He kisses her and they hurry out, with his arm about her.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*In the corridor, lifts the window.*] I hear the door —

TILLMAN. There they are!

[SUSIE *rushes across the stage with a bowl of rice in her arms and goes out Left.*

[MR. *and* MRS. TILLMAN *wave and say* "Good-by!" "Good-by!" "Good-by!" *They close*

the window in silence. The sound is heard as the window frame reaches the bottom. They turn and come slowly forward, TILLMAN *wiping his eyes and* MRS. TILLMAN *biting her lips to keep the tears back. They come into the front room and stop, and for a second they look around the empty room.* TILLMAN *puts his hand in his pocket and takes out his cigar case.* MRS. TILLMAN, *turning, sees him; she goes to him swiftly and touches his arm, looking up at him through her tears. He turns to her and slowly takes her in his arms and holds her there close and kisses her tenderly on the cheek.*

[SUSIE *enters Left, with empty bowl, sobbing aloud, as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

(*Two months later*)

The Vatican, Rome; the Tribune of the Apollo Belvedere; a semicircular room with dark red walls; in the centre is the large statue of Apollo. There are doorways at Right and Left. There is a bench on the right side of the room. A single LADY TOURIST *enters Right, takes a hasty glance, yawns, and looking down at her Baedeker, goes out Left.* A PAPAL GUARD *is seen passing outside in the court.* A FRENCHMAN *and his* WIFE (*with Baedekers*) *are seen approaching; they are heard talking volubly. They enter Left.*

BOTH. Ah! —

[*They stand a moment in silent admiration.*

HE. [*Reading from Baedeker.*] Apollo Belvedere. [*He looks up.*] C'est superb!

SHE. [*Beaming with admiration.*] Magnifique! Voilà un homme!

HE. *Quelle grace!*

SHE. *Quelle force!*

[*Both talk at once in great admiration and intense excitement for a few moments. Then he suddenly drops into his ordinary tone and manner.*

HE. Allons, allons nous!

SHE. [*In the same tone.*] Oui, j'ai faim!

[*They go out Right.*

[JINNY *and* AUSTIN *enter Left, he looking over his shoulder. They stand a moment just inside the doorway.*

JINNY. What are you looking back so much for, Jackie?

AUSTIN. I thought I saw some one I know.

JINNY. Who?

AUSTIN. I didn't know who; it just seemed to be a familiar back.

JINNY. [*Playfully.*] Oh, come! I think the present works of art and your loving wife are quite enough for you to look at without hunting around for familiar backs!

AUSTIN. And Baedeker! [*Reading from Baedeker about the Apollo.*] Apollo Belvedere, found at the end of the fifteenth century, probably in a Roman villa —

JINNY. Of course, Apollo!

AUSTIN. Great, isn't it?

JINNY. Stunning! [*She turns and looks at him, smiling quizzically.*] *Still* — but I suppose I'm prejudiced!

AUSTIN. [*Obtuse.*] Still what?

JINNY. You dear old stupid! You know, Jack, you're deeply and *fundamentally* clever and brilliant, but you're not quite — *bright* — *not quick!*

[*Laughing*

AUSTIN. Don't you think having *one* in the family quick as chain lightning is enough? What have I missed this time, Jinny? You don't mean you've found a family likeness in the statue over there? I don't want to be unappreciative, but it doesn't suggest your father to me in the least, — nor even Geoffrey.

JINNY. *Stupid!!* Of course it doesn't *suggest* anybody to me — I was only thinking I sympathized with Mrs. Perkins of Boston, — don't you know the old story about her?

AUSTIN. No, what was it?

JINNY. [*After a quick look around to see that*

they are alone.] Well — Mrs. Perkins from Boston was personally conducted here once and shown this very statue, and she looked at it for a few moments, and then turned around and said, "Yes, it's all right, but give *me Perkins!*"

AUSTIN. Jinny!

[*Laughing.*

JINNY. Are you shocked? Come, I'm tired; let's sit down here and read my letters — there's one from Geof.

[*They sit on the bench at Right, and* JINNY *takes out a letter from* GEOFFREY.

AUSTIN. I'll read ahead in Baedeker and you tell me if there's any news. [*He opens the Baedeker and reads, and she opens and reads the letter.*] Where is Geof's letter from?

JINNY New York, of course; where else would it be?

AUSTIN. I had an idea he was going away.

JINNY. Geof! Where?

AUSTIN. West, a good way somewhere.

JINNY. But *why* would he go West?

AUSTIN. Oh, he had some business, I believe; I remember thinking it was a good idea when he told me. It was the day we were married — I was waiting for you to come downstairs.

JINNY. I think it's very funny Geof never said anything about it to *me*.

AUSTIN. My dear, what time had *you?* You were *getting married!!*

JINNY. I *was!* Thank heaven! I'm *so happy*, Jack!

[*Snuggling up to him on the bench.*

AUSTIN. [*Steals a little, quick hug with his arm about her waist.*] Bless you, darling, I don't think there was ever a man as happy as I am!

[*They start apart quickly as a* GERMAN COUPLE *enter Right, with a* YOUNG DAUGHTER, *who is munching a cake, and hanging, a tired and unwilling victim, to her mother's hand.*

WOMAN. Ach! schön! sehr schön!!

MAN. Grösses, nicht?

WOMAN. *Yah!*

[*They stand admiring.*

AUSTIN. By the way, when you answer your brother's letter, I wish you'd say I seemed surprised he was still in New York.

JINNY. [*Reading.*] Um — um —

MAN. [*Wiping his warm brow.*] *Wunderbaum!*

WOMAN. *Yah!!*

[*They go out Left, talking.*

JINNY. [*Looking up from her letter.*] Oh! what do you think?

AUSTIN. That you're the sweetest woman in the world.

JINNY. No, *darling*, I mean *who* do you think Geoffrey says is over here and in Italy?

AUSTIN. I haven't the most remote idea! So far as *I've* been able to observe there has been absolutely *no one* in Italy but *you and me.*

JINNY. If you keep on talking like that, I shall kiss you!

AUSTIN. What! before the tall, white gentleman? [*Motioning to Apollo.*] I am dumb.

JINNY. [*Very lovingly.*] Silly! Well! — Mrs. Cullingham and Peter are over here and have brought Ruth Chester!

AUSTIN. [*Speaking without thinking.*] Then it *was* her back.

JINNY. [*With the smallest sharpening of the look in her eye.*] When?

AUSTIN. That I saw just now.

JINNY. [*With the tiniest suggestion of a strain in her voice.*] You said you didn't know whom it reminded you of.

AUSTIN. Yes, I know, I didn't quite.

JINNY. But if you thought it was Ruth Chester, why not have said so?

AUSTIN. No reason, dear, I simply didn't think.

JINNY. Well — [*Sententiously.*] — *next time — think!*

AUSTIN. What else does Geoffrey say?

JINNY. Oh, nothing. The heat for two days was frightful — already they miss me more than he can say —

[*Interrupted.*

AUSTIN. I'll bet.

JINNY. Father smoked nineteen cigars a day the first week I was gone.

AUSTIN. *I* haven't *had* to smoke *any!*

JINNY. Mercy! don't boast! — and he thinks they will all soon go to Long Island for the summer.

AUSTIN. Doesn't he say a word nor a hint at his going West?

JINNY. No, he says he may go to Newport for August, and that's all.

[*Putting away letter, and getting out others.*

AUSTIN. Going to read all those?

JINNY. If you don't mind, while I rest. *Do* you mind?

AUSTIN. Of course not, but I think while you're reading I'll just take a little turn and see if I can't come across the Cullinghams.

[*Rising.*

JINNY. [*After the merest second's pause, and looking seriously at him.*] Why don't you?

AUSTIN. I'll bring them here if I find them —

[*He goes out Right.*

[JINNY *looks up where he went off and gazes, motionless, for a few moments. Then she throws off the mood and opens a letter.*

[*Two tired Americans enter Right, a girl and her mother,* MRS. LOPP *and* CARRIE.

MRS. LOPP. What's this, Carrie?

CARRIE. [*Looking in her Baedeker.*] I don't know; I've sort of lost my place, somehow!

MRS. LOPP. Well, we must be in Room No. 3 or 4 — ain't we?

CARRIE. [*Reads out.*] The big statue at the end of Room No. 3 is Diana the Huntress.

MRS. LOPP. This must be it, then, — Diana! Strong-looking woman, ain't she?

CARRIE. Yes, very nice. You know she was the goddess who wouldn't let the men see her bathe

MRS. LOPP. Mercy, Carrie! and did all the other goddesses? I don't think much of their habits. I suppose this is the same person those Italians sell on the streets at home, and call the Bather.

[JINNY *is secretly very much amused, finally she speaks.*

JINNY. Excuse me, but you are in one of the cabinets — and this is the Apollo Belvedere.

MRS. LOPP. Oh, thank you very much. I guess we've got mixed up with the rooms, — seems as if there's so many.

CARRIE. [*Triumphantly.*] There! I *thought* it was a man all the time!

MRS. LOPP. Well, what with so many of the statues only being piecemeal, as it were, and so many of the men having kinder women's hair

I declare it seems as if I don't know the ladies from the gentlemen half the time.

CARRIE. Did the rest of us go through here?

JINNY. I beg your pardon?

CARRIE. Thirty-four people with a gassy guide? We got so tired hearing him talk that we jes' sneaked off by ourselves, and now we're a little scared about getting home; we belong to the Cook's Gentlemen and Ladies.

JINNY. Oh, no, the others haven't passed through here; probably they have gone to see the pictures; you'd better go back and keep asking the attendants the way to the pictures till you get there.

MRS. LOPP. [*With rather subdued voice.*] Thank you! We've come to do Europe and the Holy Land in five weeks for $400 — but I don't know, seems as if I'm getting awful tired — after jes' sevin days.

CARRIE. [*Affectionately.*] Now, mommer, don't give up; it's because you haven't got over being seasick yet; that's all!

JINNY. [*Helplessly.*] Oh, yes, you'll find it much less tiring in a few days, I'm sure.

MRS. LOPP. Still Rome does seem a powerful way from *home!* How'll we ask for the pictures?

CARRIE. Why, mommer! "Tableaux!" "Tableaux!" I should think you'd 'a' learned that from our church entertainments! Good-by; thank you ever so much.

MRS. LOPP. You haven't lost *your party*, too, have you?

JINNY. [*Smiling.*] I hope not! He *promised* to come back!!

MRS. LOPP. Oh! pleased to have met you — Good-by!

[*They start off Left.*

JINNY. No, not that way — back the way you came.

MRS. LOPP. Oh, thank you!

[*She drops her black silk bag; out of it drop crackers, an account book, a thimble, a thread-and-needle case, a bottle of pepsin tablets, etc. They all stoop to pick the collection up,* JINNY *helping.*

JINNY. [*Handing.*] I'm sure you'll want these!

MRS. LOPP. Yes, indeed; don't you find them coupon meals very dissatisfactory?

CARRIE. Thank you ever so much again. Come on, mommer!

[MRS. LOPP *and* CARRIE *go out Left.*

[JINNY *looks at her watch and goes back to her letter.*

[MRS. CULLINGHAM *enters Left*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Screams.*] Jinny!

JINNY. [*Jumps up.*] Mrs. Cullingham! [*They embrace.*] Did Jack find you?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. No, we haven't seen him! Ruth and Peter are dawdling along, each on their own; I like to shoot through a gallery. There's no use spending so much time; when it's over you've mixed everything all up just the same!

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] Well, I've this minute read a letter from Geoffrey saying you were over here. And Jack, who thought he got a glimpse of you a little while ago, went straight off to try and find you.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. What fun it is to see you —and how *happy* you look!

JINNY. I couldn't *look* as happy as I *feel!*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Glancing at the statue.*] Who's your friend? Nice gent, isn't he?

[*Laughing.*

JINNY. Mr. Apollo! Would you like to meet him?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Hesitates.*] Er — no — I don't think! You must draw the line somewhere! He wouldn't do a thing to Corbett, would he?

JINNY. Who was Corbett?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. He was a prize fighter, and *is* — but that's another story — Do you mean to say you've never heard of him?

JINNY. Oh, the name sounds familiar. But this, you know, is Apollo.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. No, I don't know; was he a champion?

JINNY. No, he was a Greek god!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, was he? Well, I wouldn't have cared about being in the tailoring business in those days, would you? Let's sit down. [*They sit on bench Right.*] Of course you

know we wouldn't accept a thing like that in Peoria, where I come from, as a gift! No, indeed! If the King of Italy sent it over to our Mayor, he'd return it C.O.D.

JINNY. Sounds like Boston and the Macmonnies Bacchante!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, my dear, *worse* than that! It reminds me of a man at home who kept an underclothing store in our principal street and had a plaster cast of this gent's brother, I should think, in his window to show a suit of Jaegers on, — you know, a "combination"! And our Town Committee of Thirteen for the moral improvement of Peoria made the man take it out of his window and hang the suit up empty!

JINNY. Poor man!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. You ought to see our Park! — you know we've got a perfectly beautiful

park, — and all the *men* statues wear Prince Alberts, and stand like this — [*She poses with lifted arm at right angle to body.*] — as if they were saying, "This way out" or "To the monkey cage and zoo."

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] But the women statues?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. My dear! They only have heads and hands; all the rest's just clumps of drapery — we only have "Americans" and "Libertys," anyway. They apply the Chinese emigration law to all Venuses and *sich ladies!*

[*They both laugh.*

JINNY. Where did you say Peter and Ruth were?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Well, I left Peter — who isn't at all well; I hoped this trip would help his indigestion, but it seems to have made it worse! — I left him — er — in a room with a lot of *broken-*

up Venuses — I thought it was all right; he was eating candy, and there wasn't a whole woman among 'em!

JINNY. [*Slight strain in her voice.*] How did you happen to bring over Ruth Chester?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Well, you know I always liked her. She never snubbed me in her life — I don't think any one you've introduced me to has been quite so nice to Peter and me as Mrs. Chester and her daughter.

JINNY. O they *are* real people!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Ruth is terribly depressed over something. She's thin as a rail and the family are worried. She says there's nothing worrying her, and the doctors can't find anything the matter with her, — so Mrs. Chester asked me if I wouldn't take her abroad. They thought the voyage and change might do her good, and I

seem to have a more cheery influence over her than most people. So here we are! [*As* PETER *enters Left, eating.*] Here's Peter! How do you think the darling looks?

PETER. How do you do, Mrs. Austin?

JINNY. How do you do, Peter? [*They shake hands.*] I'm sorry to hear you are seedy, but you eat too many sweet things.

PETER. I'm not eating candy; it's soda mints! [*Showing a small bottle.*] I *am* bad to-day, mother.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. If you don't get better, we'll go to Carlsbad.

JINNY. How do you like Rome, Peter?

PETER. Oh, I don't know — too much Boston and not enough Chicago to make it a real lively town.

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] I think I'll go look for Jack and tell him you've turned up.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Perhaps he's found Ruth.

JINNY. [*With a change in her voice.*] Yes, perhaps.

[*She goes out Right.*

PETER. [*Going to the doorway Right, calls after her.*] Ruth's in a room on your left, with rows of men's heads on shelves, Emperors and things, — but gee, such a *job lot!*

[*Comes back and looks up at the statue.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Isn't it beautiful, Peter?

PETER. No, it's *too big!*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Still this one isn't broken!

PETER. That's a comfort! Yes, it has been mended, too! [*Examining.*] Oh, yes, it's only another of these second-hand statues. Say, you missed one whole one, the best I've seen yet! A Venus off in a fine little room, all mosaics and painted walls, — that's where I've been.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Why, Peter Cullingham! *Alone?* What kind of a Venus?

PETER. Oh, beautiful! I forgot to take my medicine!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Was she — er — *dressed,* darling?

PETER. We — you know — she *had* been, but she'd sort of pushed it a good way off!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*With a sigh.*] You know we *ought* to admire these things, Peter darling; that's partly what we've come to Europe for!

PETER. O pshaw! here comes a gang of tourists. Come on, let's skip!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. But Ruth and Mrs. Austin?

PETER. We didn't agree to wait, and we can all meet at our hotel.

[*A crowd of* TOURISTS, *led by a* GUIDE, *presses and crowds in the doorway. They drag*

their tired feet in a listless shuffle across the room and stand in a somewhat sheepish and stupid bunch at the statue. One or two of the younger women nudge each other and giggle. The GUIDE *stands a little in advance of them. The* GUIDE *describes the statue, and while he is doing so* PETER *and* MRS. CULLINGHAM *go out Right. Most of the* TOURISTS *turn and watch them go instead of looking at the statue.*

GUIDE. This is the Apollo Belvedere, discovered at the end of the fifteenth century, some say in a Roman villa or farm-house near the Grotter Terratter. Very fine specimen both as marble and man. This statyer is calculated to make Sandow et cetery look like thirty cents. Height seven feet, weight —

A MAN TOURIST. How much?

A GIRL TOURIST. Was he married?

[*Titters from the group.*

GUIDE. Give it up! Should judge he was. The god once held a bow in his left hand and probably a laurel wreath in his right.

ANOTHER WOMAN TOURIST. A what?

GUIDE. A laurel wreath. You want to take a good look at this, as it is a very fine piece. Now come along, please — make haste; we must finish up this place before feeding!

[*He leads the way out Right, and the* TOURISTS *follow, shuffling along, without speaking,* MRS. LOPP *and* CARRIE *lagging in the rear.*

[AUSTIN *enters Left, followed by Ruth.*

AUSTIN. This is where I left her with Apollo! [*Calls.*] Jinny! She seems to have gone!

[*He looks behind the statue and out door, Right.*

RUTH. Probably the Cullinghams, who were

headed in this direction, found her, and they've all gone back for us; you see I walked all around the court first without going into the rooms, so I missed them, but found you.

AUSTIN. What shall we do? Sit down here and wait for them to come back, or shall I go in search?

RUTH. Oh, no, you might miss them, and then we'd all be lost! If you left Jinny here, she's sure to come back to meet you.

[*She sits on the bench and* AUSTIN *stands behind her.*

AUSTIN. I'm sorry to learn you've been ill.

RUTH. Oh! it's nothing.

AUSTIN. Ah, I'm afraid it's a good deal. Will you forgive me if I say I think I know what it is!

[*She looks up startled.*

[*After a moment.*

You haven't forgotten the day of Jinny's and my wedding, when you told me Geoffrey Tillman needed a friend?

RUTH. I hoped *you'd* forgotten; I oughtn't to have told you; I *oughtn't* to have!

AUSTIN. Why not? I had a talk with Geoffrey, then, and he told me everything.

RUTH. He did! You are sure?

AUSTIN. Sure. [*He sits beside her.*

RUTH. That he and I —

AUSTIN. Love each other.

RUTH. Oh, but that isn't all.

AUSTIN. I know the rest!

RUTH. He told you — about — about —

AUSTIN. The marriage? — Yes?

RUTH. Oh, I'm so glad, so glad! Now I can speak of it to some one, and some one who can advise me, and will help us.

AUSTIN. I have already advised him, but he doesn't seem to be taking my advice; it has worried me.

RUTH. When I left he was awfully depressed. He said he saw no prospect of being able to publish our marriage for years, maybe!

AUSTIN. *What* marriage?

[*In astonishment.*

RUTH. *Our* marriage, in Brooklyn! [*She notices his expression and is alarmed.*] You said he had told you!

AUSTIN. [*Recovering himself, and speaking at first with hesitation.*] Yes, but not the details, not — wait, I'm a little confused. [*Rising and walking a moment.*] Let's get it all quite clear now, that's the only way I can help you — both; I ought, of course, to have gone through it all with him, but there really wasn't time.

RUTH. I can't go on like this much longer. It's killing me to deceive mother; I *must* tell her soon!

AUSTIN. [*Quickly, stops walking.*] No. You mustn't, not yet, if I'm going to help you; you'll obey me, won't you?

RUTH. Yes, if you only will help us!

AUSTIN. You said you and Geoffrey Tillman were married where?

RUTH. In Brooklyn.

AUSTIN. When?

RUTH. A month before your wedding.

AUSTIN. [*To himself.*] It's impossible!

[*Walking up and down.*

RUTH. [*Smiling sadly.*] Oh, no! I remember the date only too well.

AUSTIN. I didn't mean that.

RUTH. I lied to my mother that day for the

first time — at any rate, since I was a child — and I've been lying to her ever since.

AUSTIN. [*Probing her.*] But — but why were you married so secretly?

RUTH. We couldn't afford to marry and set up for ourselves. He expected then to be sent off at once to the Philippines, and — well he didn't want to leave me behind, free; I'm afraid he's rather jealous — you must have found out by now that Jinny is. They all are! And *I* didn't want him to go so far off without my belonging to him either; *I'm* that jealous, too! [*Smiling.*] So — that's why!

AUSTIN. And this long period of secrecy since then — do you understand that?

RUTH. Hasn't he explained to you his debts? You know before he loved me he was very fast, but since —

AUSTIN. Yes, I know how he gave up every one of his old habits with a great deal of courage.

RUTH. *Nobody* knows what it cost him! How can you help us? Get him something to do to pay off his debts? Or can't you make him feel even if we do have to go on living at our different homes for a while, it is better to publish the fact that we are married? —

AUSTIN. I shall go back at once to America if I can persuade Jinny!

RUTH. And I, too?

AUSTIN. No. You must stay abroad till I send word for you to come home. If I am going to help you, you will help me by doing exactly as I say, won't you?

RUTH. Yes.

AUSTIN. It's *very* important that you should *absolutely obey me!*

RUTH. *I will.*

[*A pause.*

[JINNY, *unnoticed by either of them, appears in the doorway at Right.* AUSTIN *is walking up and down.* RUTH *is leaning her elbow on the back of the bench and burying her face in her hands.*

AUSTIN. It's awful! My God, it's awful!

JINNY. [*In a strained, assumed, nonchalant tone.*] *What is?*

RUTH. Jinny!

[*Rising.*

AUSTIN. I didn't hear you, Jinny!

JINNY. No, you both seemed so absorbed.

RUTH. [*Going to* JINNY.] I'm so glad to see you.

[*Kisses her, but* JINNY *only gives her her cheek and that rather unwillingly; she is looking all the time at her husband.*

JINNY. Thank you, I've just left the Culling-

hams. They sent word to you they were going and would wait for you outside.

RUTH. Oh, then, I mustn't keep them waiting. We'll all meet at dinner to-night, won't we? Good-by — good-by.

[*With a grateful look at* AUSTIN, *she goes out Right.*

JINNY. [*Watches her go; then turns to* AUSTIN.] That wasn't true, what I told her — I haven't seen the Cullinghams, and I don't know where they are, and what's more, I don't care!

AUSTIN. What do you mean?

JINNY. [*Beginning by degrees to lose control of herself.*] What did *she* mean by *following you* to Rome?

AUSTIN. Jinny!

JINNY. Oh, don't try to deny it; that'll only make me suspect *you!*

AUSTIN. My dear girl, you don't know what you're saying!

JINNY. She's ill, they say at home! Yes, and they don't know what's the matter with her, do they? No! But I can tell them! She's in love with another woman's husband!

AUSTIN. [*Taking her hand.*] Hush! I won't allow you to say such things!

JINNY. [*With a disagreeable little laugh.*] Oh, won't you? *You'd* better be careful,— my eyes are opened!

AUSTIN. Yes, and much too wide.

JINNY. A half-blind person would have known there was something between you two. When I came into this room just now, it was in the air — it was in both your faces!

[*She sits on the bench.*

AUSTIN. You've worked yourself up to such a

pitch you're not responsible for what you're saying!

JINNY. *I* not *responsible!* What was it you were saying was *so* "awful" when I came in here? "My God, so awful!"

[*He doesn't answer.*

[*Almost hysterical, she rises.*

She had told you she loved you! She'd confessed she'd followed you over here!

AUSTIN. Absolutely false, *both* your suppositions!

JINNY. Oh, of course you'd protect her; you're a gentleman! But if I *thought* you *knew* she was coming over —

AUSTIN. Jinny! Jinny! How *can* you have such a thought?

JINNY. Well, why didn't you tell me when you thought you saw her a little while ago?

AUSTIN. Oh —

JINNY. Oh, it's very easy to say "Oh!" [*Imitating him.*] but *why didn't you?*

AUSTIN. I told you I didn't think who it was; I only thought something familiar flashed across my eyes. Jinny darling, this is sheer madness on your part, letting yourself go like this. It has no reason, it has no excuse! Ask your own heart, and your own mind, if in speaking to *me* as you have, you haven't done me at least an injustice and my love for you a *little* wrong.

JINNY. Well, I'm sure *she's* in love with you, anyway.

AUSTIN. No, she isn't! And it's disgraceful of you to say so! I know she isn't —

JINNY. How do you know she isn't?

AUSTIN. There's no question of it. I'm sure of it! You mustn't think, dear, that because *you* love me, everybody does — you idealize me!

[*Smiling apologetically.*

JINNY. Oh, you're so modest you don't see! but I do — on the steamer, in the hotels, everywhere we go, always, all the women admire you awfully! I see it!

AUSTIN. [*Laughing.*] What utter nonsense! [*Taking her into his arms.*] You've got something in your *eyes!*

JINNY. Only tears!

AUSTIN. No, something else, — something *green.*

JINNY. [*Laughs through her tears.*] Somebody's told you my old nickname!

AUSTIN. What?

JINNY. [*Laughs and is a little embarrassed.*] The girl with the green eyes.

AUSTIN. Ahem! —

JINNY. Well, I don't care if it is appropriate, I can't help it.

[*Slipping from his arms.*

AUSTIN. You must — or it will threaten our happiness if you let yourself be carried away by jealousy for no earthly reason outside of your dear, little imagination, like you have this time —

[*Interrupted.*

JINNY. You honestly don't think she cares for you?

AUSTIN. Not a bit!

JINNY. But what was it you were so serious about — what *is* between you?

AUSTIN. She is in a little trouble, and I happen to know about it.

JINNY. How?

AUSTIN. [*After a second's hesitation.*] That you mustn't ask me; it was not from her I knew of it.

JINNY. Truly?

AUSTIN. Truly.

JINNY. I don't care, she hadn't any business to go to you! I should think she'd have gone to a *woman* instead of a *man* for sympathy. She's got Mrs. Cullingham!

AUSTIN. She can't go to her, poor girl. Mrs. Cullingham knows nothing about it.

JINNY. Now don't you get too sympathetic — *that's very dangerous!*

AUSTIN. Look out, your imagination is peeping through the keyhole.

[*A moment's pause.*

JINNY. [*In a sympathetic tone, the jealousy gone.*] What is her trouble, Jack?

AUSTIN. That, dear, I can't tell you now; some day, perhaps, if you want me to, but not now. Only I give you my word of honor, it has nothing to do with you and me — does not touch our

life! And I want you to tell me you believe me, and *trust* me, and won't let yourself be jealous again!

JINNY. I do believe you, and I do trust you, and I will *try* not to be jealous again!

AUSTIN. That's right.

JINNY. You know that book of De Maupassant's [*They move away together.*] I was reading in the train the other day, — about the young girl who killed herself with charcoal fumes when her lover deserted her?

AUSTIN. [*Half laughing.*] This is apropos of what, please? I have absolutely *no* sympathy with such people.

JINNY. In America that girl would have simply turned on the gas.

AUSTIN. You're getting morbid, Jinny!

JINNY. No, I'm not! but if ever —

AUSTIN. [*Interrupting — laughing it off*]. I shall install *electric light* as soon as we get home!

[*They both laugh.*

JINNY. I'm sorry I was so disagreeable to Ruth, but I'll try to make up for it in every way I can.

[*She sits on the bench and he leans over the back toward her.*

AUSTIN. There's one other thing, Jinny, I'd like to speak of now. Would you mind giving up the Lakes and going home this week?

JINNY. Going *home* — at once?

AUSTIN. Yes — *Wall Street* is very uncertain. I'm worried, — I don't mind telling you, — and I want to see Geoffrey about his business.

JINNY. [*Half in earnest.*] Jack! You're not running away from *her*, are you?

AUSTIN. Jinny! *After all* we've said!

JINNY. No! I wasn't in earnest! I'm ready to go. I've seen the Lakes, and whether you are in Italy or in New York, so long as we are together, it's our honeymoon just the same.

AUSTIN. And may it last *all our lives!*

JINNY. Still, I don't mind owning up that leaving Ruth Chester behind here is rather pleasanter! [*She rises quickly with a sudden thought.*] *She* is not going back, too?

AUSTIN. Oh, no, not for a long time. They are over here indefinitely.

JINNY. I've been too horrid and nasty for words this morning, Jack — I'm so sorry.

AUSTIN. It's over and forgotten now.

JINNY. You *do* forgive me?

AUSTIN. Of course, dear; only I want to say

this one thing to you: to suspect unjustly a *true* love is to insult that love!

JINNY. I didn't really suspect you.

AUSTIN. Of course I know you didn't; this is only by way of a grandfatherly warning! It is possible to insult a true love too often — and love can die —

JINNY. Sh! don't, please, say any more. You have forgiven me, haven't you?

AUSTIN. Yes!

JINNY. Then kiss me!

AUSTIN. [*Smiling.*] Here! My dear, some one will see us!

JINNY. No, only Apollo; see, there's no one else about — it's luncheon hour!

AUSTIN. But — [*Taking her hand.*

JINNY. [*Pulling him.*] Come along, then, behind the statue. No one will see us there!

[*They are behind the statue a moment and then come around the other side.*

JINNY. There! no one saw us, and I'm so *happy*, are you?

AUSTIN. "*So happy!*"

[JINNY *takes his arm and they go to the Left entrance. She stops and looks up at him.*

JINNY. Are my eyes *green* now?

AUSTIN. Now they're *blue!*

JINNY. Hurrah! and I'm going, from now on, to be *so good*, you won't know me.

[*And hugging his arm tight they go out as* —

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

(*Three weeks later*)

The Austins' library; a warm, attractive room, with dark woodwork, and the walls hung in crimson brocade; Dutch marqueterie furniture; blue and white china on the mantel and tops of the book shelves; carbon photographs of pictures by Reynolds, Romney, and Gainsborough on the wall. There is a double window at the back. A door at Right leads to the hall, and another on the Left side of the room leads to JINNY'S *own room.* MRS. TILLMAN *sits at a pianola Right, playing "Tell me, Pretty Maiden"; she stops once in a while, showing that she is unaccustomed to the instrument.* JINNY *enters from Left, singing as her mother plays.*

JINNY. Darling mother!

[*She puts her arms about her and kisses her.*

[*They come away from the pianola together, to a big armchair.*

MRS. TILLMAN. I really must get one of those sewing-machine pianos for your father. I believe even he could play it, and it would be lots of amusement for us.

JINNY. Jack adores it; I gave it to him for an anniversary present.

MRS. TILLMAN. What anniversary?

[*Sitting in the chair.*

JINNY. Day before yesterday. The eleventh Tuesday since our marriage. Have you been in town all day? I *am* glad to see you!

[*She sits on the arm of the chair with her arm about her mother.*

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, and I told your father to

meet me here and we'd take the six-thirty train from Long Island City.

JINNY. Jack and I are going to the theatre to-night.

MRS. TILLMAN. I thought they were all closed!

JINNY. Oh, no, there are several musical comedies on, — Jack's favorite form of amusement, — and I've bought the tickets myself for a sort of birthday party.

MRS. TILLMAN. Is it his birthday?

JINNY. No, that's only my excuse!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Laughing.*] Had we dreamed you and Jack were coming home in June, your father and I wouldn't have gone into the country so early.

JINNY. We've been home two weeks and it hasn't been hot yet.

MRS. TILLMAN. And you're still ideally happy aren't you, darling?

JINNY. Yes —

[*She rises and goes to a table near the centre of the room and looks at the titles of several books without realizing what they are.*

MRS. TILLMAN. Why, Jinny, — what does that mean?

JINNY. Oh, it's all my horrid disposition!

MRS. TILLMAN. Been seeing green?

JINNY. Um! Um! Once in Rome, and on the steamer, and again since we've been back.

MRS. TILLMAN. Nothing serious?

JINNY. [*Hesitatingly, she turns and faces her mother.*] No — but the last time Jack was harder to bring around than before, and he looked at me for fully five minutes without a particle of love in his eyes, and they were almost — *dead* eyes!

MRS. TILLMAN. What was it all about?

JINNY. Ruth Chester, principally.

MRS. TILLMAN. Why Ruth?

JINNY. Well, the first real scene I made was in Rome in the Vatican. I was jealous of her; I can't explain it all to you — as a matter of fact, it hasn't been all explained to *me!* Something was troubling Ruth that Jack knew, and he said he'd help her.

MRS. TILLMAN. What?

JINNY. That's just it; Jack won't tell me. And the day we sailed from Naples a telegram came, and of course I opened it, and it said, "Trust me, I will do everything you say. Ruth."

MRS. TILLMAN. Why haven't you told me anything of all this before, dear?

JINNY. [*Going back to her mother.*] I was

ashamed to! Somehow, in the end I always knew I was wrong and had hurt him — hurt him terribly, mother, the man I love better than everything else in the world! Yes, even better than you and father and Geoffrey — all together!

[*In her mother's arms, crying a little.*

MRS. TILLMAN. Oh, this curse of jealousy! I was in hopes he was so strong he would help you to overcome it.

JINNY. He does try hard, I can see sometimes; but he hasn't a spark of it in him, and he can't understand it, and I know I'm unreasonable, and before I know it I am saying things I don't know what, and some day he won't forgive them! I'm sure some day he won't! —

[*Breaking down again.*

[*She rises and turns away.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Rising and putting her arm*

about her.] Come, dear! Now you're getting yourself all unstrung, and that won't do you any good; you've got to fight this battle out, I'm afraid, by yourself, trusting in the deep love of your husband to teach him forbearance. Your father's and my troubles were never very big because we *shared* the curse, so we knew how to sympathize with each other!

JINNY. What an awful thing it is!

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, my dear child. Jealousy has no saving grace, and it only destroys what is always most precious to you. Jinny, don't let it destroy *your best* happiness!

JINNY. Mother, if it *should*, I'd kill myself!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Shocked, but quite disbelieving her.*] My dear!

[MAGGIE *enters Right.*

MAGGIE. Mr. Tillman is downstairs, madam

MRS. TILLMAN. Tell him to come up.

MAGGIE. Yes, madam.

[*She goes out Right.*

JINNY. Don't tell father anything before me.

MRS. TILLMAN. I don't know that I shall tell him at all; he would only advise more cigars!

[TILLMAN *enters Right.*

[MRS. TILLMAN *sits on the sofa at Left.*

TILLMAN. Are you here?

JINNY. [*Going to meet him.*] We are, father dear, and your presence *almost* completes us. [*Kisses him.*] I say *almost*, because Jack hasn't come up town yet, and Geoffrey's heartless enough to stay on fishing at Cape Cod!

TILLMAN. No, he isn't; he's back to-day.

[*He sits in the armchair at Right.*

JINNY. Oh, I do want to see him!

[*Sitting near her father.*

TILLMAN. He ought to have been in by now — I met them this morning. He was to lunch with Jack, and he's going to put up for a few days at the University.

JINNY. He must dine with us every night.

TILLMAN. Jinny! — [*Looking at her.*] — You look as if you've been crying!

[*The two* WOMEN *are embarrassed, and* JINNY *doesn't reply.*

TILLMAN. [*Hurt.*] Oh, if you prefer to have secrets from your father, it's all right! *I don't begrudge* your mother her *first place* in your affections!

JINNY. Not at all, father; with you and mother there's no first place. She will tell you all about it on the way home! Please, mother.

MRS. TILLMAN. Very well, dear.

TILLMAN. A little "scrap" between you and Jack?

JINNY. Yes, but it's all over!

TILLMAN. Um! — [*Thinks a second, then taking out his cigar case, he empties it of cigars and hands them to* JINNY.] *Give your husband these, please, when he comes in!*

[JINNY *and her* MOTHER *exchange a smile.*

JINNY. But, father, Jack's got boxes full —

TILLMAN. Never mind; give him those, *from me, with my compliments!*

JINNY. [*Laughing.*] Very well!

TILLMAN. How are you and Maggie getting on?

JINNY. Splendidly.

MRS. TILLMAN. Such a nice girl!

JINNY. And wasn't it odd Jack was bitterly opposed to my taking her?

MRS. TILLMAN. My dear, if we hadn't lent her to you for these few weeks, you wouldn't have got anybody decent for so short a time.

TILLMAN. Why didn't Jack want her to come?

JINNY. I don't know, he just didn't want her; and then last week he talked with her in the library for three-quarters of an hour by my watch.

MRS. TILLMAN. Why?

JINNY. Oh, it seems *she* has troubles, too! All single young women with troubles, of no matter what class, seem to make a bee line for my husband, even if they have to cross the ocean!

TILLMAN. What do you mean?

JINNY. [*Half laughing.*] Oh, nothing, but it was about that talk with Maggie that we had our last quarrel.

[MAGGIE *enters Right.*

MAGGIE. Mrs. Cullingham.

[*A second's dead silence, the announcement falling like a bombshell.*

JINNY. [*Astounded.*] *Who?*

[*She rises.*

TILLMAN AND MRS. TILLMAN. *Who?*

MAGGIE. Mrs. Cullingham and her son, madam.

JINNY. They're in Europe.

MRS. TILLMAN. Are you sure you're not mistaken, Maggie?

MAGGIE. Oh, yes'm. Even if you *could* mistake Mrs. Cullingham, you couldn't mistake Mr. Peter!

JINNY. Ask them to please come up, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes'm.

[*She goes out Right.*

TILLMAN. Why, they only just sailed the other day, didn't they?

MRS. TILLMAN. Yes, and they were supposed to be gone all summer at least, for Ruth Chester's health! What in the world can they have come back for?

JINNY. [*With curious determination.*] *That* is what *I* intend to find out.

TILLMAN. [*Rising.*] We must be going, Susan; we've lost our train as it is.

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Rising.*] We can take the seven-two.

[MAGGIE *shows in* MRS. CULLINGHAM *and* PETER. PETER *shakes hands with* MRS. TILLMAN, *then with* JINNY, *and then with* MR. TILLMAN.

[MRS. CULLINGHAM *kisses* MRS. TILLMAN *and shakes hands with* MR. TILLMAN.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Jinny, you angel, aren't you surprised!

[*Kissing her.*

JINNY. Well, rather!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Well, you aren't a bit more surprised than I am. [*A clock strikes six-*

thirty.] There goes the half hour, Peter; you must take your powder.

PETER. I beg your pardon, mother; it's the tablet now.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Excuse me, dear, I'm so dead tired.

[*Sits on the sofa.*

JINNY. [*To Peter.*] Will you have some water?

PETER. No, thank you, I've learned now to take them *au naturel*, and without much, if any, inconvenience!

[*Takes his tablet with still a certain amount of difficulty, and sits Right.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*To* MRS. CULLINGHAM.] Did you have a bad voyage?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. No, perfectly beautiful!

PETER. [*Reproachfully, and with a final swallow.*] Oh, mother!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Except, of course, for poor Peter; he gets worse every trip! He can eat *absolutely nothing* — that is *for long!* But it's the Custom House that's worn me out; I was there from twelve till four.

MRS. TILLMAN. But you wouldn't have had time to buy anything!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Of course not! But I took plenty of new dresses for the entire summer; most of them hadn't been worn, and they were determined to make me pay duty.

JINNY. We had to pay awfully for things! I wanted to try and smuggle, but Jack wouldn't let me!

MR. TILLMAN. I'm afraid *we* must go!

[ALL *rise.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. What do you think the Inspector had the impudence to ask me finally,

— if I wanted to bring the dresses in as theatrical properties!

[*They laugh.*

MRS. TILLMAN. You must have some *gorgeous* frocks!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, there are some *paillettes!* But who do you suppose he took me for — Sarah Bernhardt!

TILLMAN. [*Looking at his watch.*] I don't wish to interrupt this vital political conversation, but, Susan, if you don't want to miss the seven-two train, too —!

MRS. TILLMAN. [*Rising.*] Oh, no, we mustn't do that. Good-by. [*To* MRS. CULLINGHAM, *shaking hands.*] It's nice to see you again, anyway. Is Ruth better?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I'm sorry to say — I don't think she is — good-by.

[*To* MR. TILLMAN, *who says good-by — general good-bys.*

MRS. TILLMAN. [*To* JINNY.] You want me to tell your father?

JINNY. Yes, it's better; it does make him jealous if he thinks I tell you things and keep secrets from him.

TILLMAN. Good-by, Peter.

MRS. TILLMAN. Good-by, Peter.

PETER. By-by.

[MR. *and* MRS. TILLMAN *quickly go out Right,* JINNY *going to the door with them.*

JINNY. [*Coming back from doorway.*] Now do tell me what it means. I thought you were abroad indefinitely, or for the summer at least.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. So did I! I'm just as surprised to be here as you *seem to be!* [*They*

sit down near each other.] Didn't you really know we were coming?

JINNY. No! How should I?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I don't know — I thought—

[*She hesitates, embarrassed.*

[*After a pause.*

JINNY. What did you think?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Nothing, except that you must know we were coming home.

JINNY. Why — that *I* must?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. You mustn't put me into a corner like that!

JINNY. How do you mean "corner"? How did you happen to come home like this?

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Ruth suddenly got a cable — she didn't tell me from whom — but she said she must go home at once.

JINNY. But her mother's never been better!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Carelessly.*] The cable wasn't from her mother.

JINNY. Oh, then, you know who it was from? [*No answer.*] Oh, I see now why you thought I ought to know about it; the cable was from *Jack, wasn't it?*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Relieved.*] Yes.

JINNY. Oh, it was!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I looked at it when she was out of the room; of course, it was sort of by accident — [*Very much embarrassed.*] — that is, I just happened to see — O dear, there! You know what I mean; it was dreadful of me, but I couldn't help it.

JINNY. [*In a strained voice.*] Jack and Ruth are very good friends and he looks after some of her affairs. You know having no man in the family complicates things.

PETER. Oh! I say!

[*Standing up, suddenly.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. What *is it*, dear?

PETER. I believe I haven't got my before-dinner tabs.

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Oh, look carefully!

PETER. [*He looks in his right-hand pocket, takes out a bottle.*] Soda mints! [*From his left-hand pocket a box.*] Alkali powders! [*From third pocket a bottle.*] Charcoal tablets! [*From fourth pocket another bottle.*] Dr. Man's Positive Cure! [*From fifth pocket a box.*] Bicarbonate soda!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. There's your other side pocket!

PETER. That's my saccharine [*Showing bottle.*] and my lithia tabs. [*Showing another bottle.*] We'll have to go, mother; I've left them home!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. We must go, anyway, my dear.

[*Rising.*

[JINNY *also rises.*

PETER. [*Suddenly claps his hand behind him and speaks joyfully.*] No, we needn't go after all; I forgot my hip pocket. Here they are!

[*Bringing them out.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. We must go all the same! [*To* JINNY.] Sometimes I think he takes too much medicine stuff!

JINNY. I should think so! Peter, you ought to diet.

PETER. I can't! I've tried, and I lose my appetite right away!

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Good-by, dear. How long will you be in town?

JINNY. I don't know—several weeks, I imagine.

Jack came home on some business, you know, and I don't think it's settled yet. Good-by.

[*To* PETER.

PETER. Good-by. You know you mustn't drink water with your meals; that's the great thing. So I drink only champagne.

[*He goes out Right.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. [*Waits and speaks to* JINNY *with real feeling.*] I'm awfully ashamed of myself, and I hope I haven't made any trouble or fuss with my meddling. Don't let me!

JINNY. No, of course not.

[*With a strained smile.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. I wish I could believe you.

JINNY. Well, *do.*

MRS. CULLINGHAM. Good-by.

[*She goes out Right*

JINNY. Good-by. Where's that telegram that came for him a little while ago? [*Going to the desk at Right, and finding the telegram.*] Of course it's from her, saying that she's arrived. That's the trouble with telegrams; the address doesn't give the handwriting away. She must have sent it from the dock! Couldn't even wait till she was home! [*She walks to the window and stands there a moment, then comes back, looking at her watch.*] Nearly seven already, and no sign of him, and we must dress and dine — huh! I think I might as well tear up my theatre tickets! [*She paces up and down the room, stopping now and then with each new thought that comes to her.*] I wonder if he went down there to meet her —he must have known the boat; if he cabled her to come back, she must have cabled an answer and what boat she'd take! But no other telegram

has come for Jack here to my knowledge — oh! of course, what am I thinking of, she sent *that one* to *his office* to-day; she was afraid he might have left before this one could get there, so she risked it here. Good Heavens! why am I maudling on like this to myself out loud? It's really nothing — Jack will *explain* once more that he *can't* explain, but that Ruth has "troubles," and I'll believe him again! But I won't! He promised me she should stay over there! [*Looks at her watch again.*] He's there, with her! *Nothing ever* kept him half as late down town as this! What a little fool I am!

[GEOFFREY *enters suddenly Right.*

JINNY. [*Cries out, joyfully.*] Geoffrey! [*And rushing to him, embraces him.*] You brute, you, not to come straight back to New York when you heard I was home! You dear old darling, you!

GEOFFREY. I couldn't, old girl; there were reasons — I don't have to tell you I wanted to.

JINNY. I don't know! Was there a pretty girl up there, Geof? I'm sure I shouldn't think her pretty if you were in love with her. I believe I shall be awfully jealous of your wife when you get one!

GEOFFREY. Rubbish! Hasn't Jack come back yet?

JINNY. "Come back" from where?

GEOFFREY. Brooklyn.

JINNY. Brooklyn! Why, he told me — what did he go there for?

GEOFFREY. [*Embarrassed.*] I don't know if you don't —

JINNY. You *do!!*

GEOFFREY. No — really — I —

JINNY. Oh, it's something to be concealed, then?

GEOFFREY. Hang it, Jinny! drop the subject. I thought he said he was going to Brooklyn; probably I was mistaken.

JINNY. [*Satirically.*] One is so apt to think just casually that every one's going to Brooklyn! [*Looks at her watch.*] Of course it's Brooklyn. [*Goes and looks at the telegram; turns.*] So you're going back on *me*, too, are you? You're going to *protect Jack* at *my* expense!

[AUSTIN *enters Right.*

AUSTIN. [*Absorbed.*] Good evening, Jinny dear.

JINNY. It's after seven!

AUSTIN. [*Pleasantly.*] Is it? Have you been waiting long, Geoffrey?

GEOFFREY. No, I've only just now come in.

JINNY. It's *I* who have done the waiting!

AUSTIN. I'm sorry, but it couldn't be helped.

JINNY. You didn't tell me you were going to Brooklyn.

AUSTIN. [*After a quick, sharp look at Geoffrey, who shakes his head once emphatically.*] It must have escaped my mind.

JINNY. That's very likely! Going to Brooklyn's the sort of thing one talks about and dreads for days.

AUSTIN. Well, Jinny, that will bear postponement, and my conversation with Geoffrey won't; will you please leave us together here for a while?

JINNY. And what about the theatre?

AUSTIN. What theatre?

JINNY. Oh, you've *forgotten* entirely my little birthday party! Thanks!

AUSTIN. Oh, Jinny! I *did!* Forgive me! I'm awfully sorry! I've got a lot on my mind to-day.

[*Tries to put his arms about her and kiss her. She pushes herself away from him, refusing to let him kiss her.*

JINNY. Yes — I know you have — [*At door Left.*] — I'll leave you two to your confidences. You can trust Geof; he just now refused to betray you.

[AUSTIN *only looks at her fixedly, seriously. She looks back at him with bravado. Then she deliberately crosses the room, gets the cable, and recrosses with it and goes out Left.*

AUSTIN. Poor Jinny! [*Turning to* GEOFFREY.] and that, too, lies largely on your already overcrowded shoulders.

GEOFFREY. [*Breaking down.*] I know! I know!

AUSTIN. [*Sitting in the corner of the sofa.*]

Here, don't cry! You've got to be strong now, and you've no use nor time for crying. I've had another long interview with the Brooklyn minister.

GEOFFREY. Yes? —

AUSTIN. [*Drawing a chair near to him and sitting.*] Well, of course we both know that he's doing wrong to keep silent, but he will. He wishes I hadn't told him, because he thinks he'd never have noticed your divorce from Maggie when it was granted — nor remembered your name if he had seen it in the papers.

GEOFFREY. That's what I *told* you!

AUSTIN. *You* only argued that for fear I'd insist on *your* going to this minister yourself. But in the bottom of your heart you know it was a risk we couldn't afford to run. I've explained everything to him — how such a fine, sweet girl

would suffer if he did expose you, and I gave him my word you would be remarried to Ruth at once after the divorce. Of course we both know it's wrong, but we both hope the end justifies the means that removes difficulty number two.

GEOFFREY. You're sure about Maggie?

AUSTIN. She's signed a paper; she realizes you'll never live with her, and — it's pathetic — she loves you — that girl, too — so much as to give you your freedom — Good Lord! what is it about you weak men that wins women so? What is it in *you* that has made two women love *you* to such a self-sacrificing extent?

GEOFFREY. [*Half tragic, half comic laugh.*] I give it up!

AUSTIN. [*Bitterly.*] So do I. Well, Maggie is to have six hundred dollars a year.

GEOFFREY. Where'll I get it?

AUSTIN. We'll talk about that when the time comes. [*He rises.*] *Now* the most important. the most painful, task of all must be done and *you* must do it. *Not I this time — you!*

GEOFFREY. [*Looking up, frightened.*] What?

AUSTIN. Ruth Chester landed this morning.

GEOFFREY. [*Starting up.*] Impossible!

[*Rising.*

AUSTIN. The moment Maggie signed my paper I cabled Miss Chester to return. You can't go out west and institute proceedings for divorce without her *knowing the whole truth from you* first! You don't want her to find it out from the newspapers, do you?

GEOFFREY. And you want *me* to tell her?

AUSTIN. *To-day.* And to-morrow you start west!

GEOFFREY. [*Facing* AUSTIN.] I *won't* tell her!

AUSTIN. [*Calmly.*] You've got to!

GEOFFREY. I'd rather shoot myself; do you understand me — I'd rather shoot myself!

AUSTIN. That's nothing! That would be decidedly the *easiest* course out of it, *and* the most *cowardly.*

GEOFFREY. She'll hate me! She'll loathe me! How could she help it at first! But just after a little, if I weren't there, the love she has for me might move her somehow or other — and by degrees perhaps — to forgive —

AUSTIN. I don't deny that you will have to go through a terrible degradation with her — but that is nothing compared with what you deserve. If *you* tell her, at least the humiliation is secret, locked there between you two, and no one else in the world can ever know what happens; *but*

if you send some one else, and no matter who, — *any one* else but you *is* an outsider, — you ask her to make a spectacle of her humiliation, to let a third in as witness to the relations and emotions between you two! It's insulting her *again!* Don't you *see?*

[*A pause.*

GEOFFREY. Yes, I see! My God! I *must* tell her myself.

AUSTIN. That's right, don't waver, make up your mind and do it — Come!

[*Urging him up.*

GEOFFREY. [*Hesitates a moment.*] And Jinny?

AUSTIN. Oh, she'll come round all right; she always does.

GEOFFREY. And she doesn't suspect?

AUSTIN. Not the slightest.

[*A pause.*

GEOFFREY. Need she?

AUSTIN. The worst? No, *never!*

GEOFFREY. [*He rises, with new encouragement.*] You'll give me your word?

AUSTIN. Yes. [*Shakes his hand.*] I know how much she loves you; *I* wouldn't have her know anything. It's made us some ugly scenes, but they soon pass, and when you are once out of your trouble for good, we'll have no excuse, I'm sure, for any more!

GEOFFREY. Then I shall go to bed to-night with the respect still of at least two women who are dear to me, my mother and Jinny, even if I lose the respect and love of the one woman who is dearer! Only think, Jack, how I've got to stand up there — never mind about myself — and make *her suffer tortures!* Good-by. God give me courage to do the heart-breaking thing I must do.

AUSTIN. I am sure the one hope you have of forgiveness is in your manliness of going to her as you are doing and telling her yourself *all* the truth!

GEOFFREY. And that, like everything else, I owe to you.

AUSTIN. No, to *Jinny!* Good luck!

[*He shakes* GEOFFREY'S *hand and* GEOFFREY *goes out Right.*

AUSTIN. [*Goes to the door Left, opens it, and calls to* JINNY, *in the next room.*] Jinny, Geoffrey's gone, — what are you doing?

JINNY. [*Answers in a very little staccato voice.*] Waiting till you should have the leisure to receive me!

AUSTIN. Come along!

[*Leaves the doorway.*

[JINNY *enters Left and stands in the doorway.*

JINNY. [*With affected nonchalance.*] I didn't care to go downstairs for dinner, so I have had a tray up here. Maggie brought up something for you, too; would you like it now?

AUSTIN. [*Ignoring purposely her mood and manner.*] I shouldn't mind! I do feel a little hungry.

[*He sits in the armchair.*

JINNY. [*Speaks off through the doorway Left.*] Bring in the tray for Mr. Austin, Maggie.

MAGGIE. [*Off stage.*] Yes'm.

[JINNY *pulls forward a little tea table beside his chair. Her whole manner must be one of slow, dragging carelessness, like the calm before a storm. Her expression must be hard. She carries the telegram still*

unopened, and on top of it the theatre tickets torn into pieces.

[MAGGIE *brings in the tray, puts it on the table, and goes out Right. On the tray are chops, peas, some whiskey, a syphon, a roll, etc.*

AUSTIN. [*Sits down quickly and with a show of eagerness.*] Ah!

[*Begins to eat as if he were hungry and enjoyed it.*

[JINNY *sits on the sofa at his Left, and looks at him,* — AUSTIN *is of course conscious of* JINNY'S *mood, but pretends not to notice it.*

AUSTIN. [*After a silence during which he eats.*] I say I *am* hungry! And these chops *are* very good, aren't they?

[*No answer.*

I'll tell you what it is, Jinny! Of course travelling is great sport and all the rest of it, but after

all one does get tired of hotels, and to quote a somewhat familiar refrain, "There's no place like home."

[*No answer.*

Have you a headache, Jinny?

JINNY. [*Very short.*] No.

AUSTIN. That's a good thing, and I hope you are not as disappointed as I am about the theatre.

JINNY. [*Half laughs.*] Humph!

AUSTIN. I'll celebrate *your* birthday to-morrow and take *you.*

JINNY. [*Quickly.*] *Why* did you go to Brooklyn?

AUSTIN. On the private business of some one else.

JINNY. [*With all her nerves tied tight.*] That's the best answer you will give me?

AUSTIN. My dear girl, it's the only answer I *can* give you.

JINNY. When you are through I have something for you!

AUSTIN. What?

JINNY. I'll give it to you when you have finished.

AUSTIN. I'm ready. [*He rises.* JINNY *rises too, and gives him the telegram with the torn tickets on top, and then rings the bell, at Right.*] What are these torn papers?

JINNY. Our theatre tickets!

[*He looks at her.*

AUSTIN. And when did this telegram come?

JINNY. This afternoon.

AUSTIN. Why didn't I get it when I came in?

JINNY. [*Bitingly.*] I kept it to have the *pleasure* of giving it to you myself; it's from Ruth Chester.

AUSTIN. How do you know?

JINNY. Oh, I haven't opened it! But I know! When I held it in my hand it burnt my fingers! [MAGGIE *enters Right.*] Take away the tray, please, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes'm.

[*She leaves the room with the tray.*

[JINNY *replaces the small table carelessly, almost roughly.*

[AUSTIN *opens and reads the telegram; there is a second's pause.*

JINNY. May I read it?

AUSTIN. [*After a moment's hesitation.*] Yes, if you wish.

[*Not handing it to her.*

JINNY. I *do!*

AUSTIN. [*Reaches over and hands her the telegram; he speaks quietly.*] When you behave like this it's impossible for me to feel the same toward you.

JINNY. And how do you think I feel when I read this?

[*Reads it, satirically, bitterly.*

"Arrived safely; please let me see you before the day goes. Ruth." "*Ruth*" if you please!

AUSTIN. [*Standing over* JINNY.] I want you to be careful to-night. I want you to control yourself. I've been through a great deal to-day, and if you make me angry God knows what I mightn't say and *do!*

JINNY. And *I've* been through a great deal *for many a day now*, and I want the truth about this at last! It's all very well for you to spare her by not telling me what this *mysterious* trouble is about which you've been hoodwinking me ever since we were married, but *now* you've got to choose between sparing *her* and sparing *me!*

[*She sits determinedly*

AUSTIN. Is this your answer to me when I beg you to be very careful to-night to control yourself?

JINNY. It's your turn to be careful! What did you marry me for if you were in love with Ruth?

AUSTIN. *Jinny!*

JINNY. [*A little frightened, to excuse herself.*] You gave me your word of honor she would stay abroad indefinitely.

AUSTIN. Nonsense! I said I understood she was going to stay some time — indefinitely.

JINNY. It's the same thing, and here she is back practically the moment we are!

AUSTIN. I can't control Miss Chester's movements — I couldn't foresee when she would come back. In Rome she told me she would stay on.

JINNY. [*Rising and facing him.*] Ah! that's what I wanted to see, if you really *would lie* to me!

AUSTIN. What do you mean?

JINNY. [*Beside herself.*] Liar! [*He only looks at her, with his face hard and set; she is insane with jealousy for the moment.*] *You sent* for Ruth to come back.

AUSTIN. *And* if *I did?*

JINNY. You tried to deceive me about it. And if you'll tell me a lie about one thing, you'll tell me a lie about another, and I don't believe one word of all your explanations about the intrigue between you and Ruth Chester!

AUSTIN. [*Taking her two hands.*] Sit down!

[*She sits in the armchair, half forced by him.*

JINNY. *Why* did you send for Ruth Chester to come back?

AUSTIN. I have told you before, I am trying to help Miss Chester.

JINNY. "*Ruth!*"

AUSTIN. I am trying to help her in a great and serious trouble.

JINNY. Why did you send for her to come back? What's the trouble?

AUSTIN. I've told you before I can't tell you.

JINNY. You daren't tell me, and you haven't even the face to tell another lie about it!

AUSTIN. If you say another word, I shall *hate* you! If you *won't* control *yourself*, I must make you, as well as keep my own sane balance. You have insulted my love for you to-night as you've never done before; you've struck at my own ideal of *you;* you've almost done, in a word, what I warned you you might do — *kill* the love I have for you!

JINNY. [*Frightened.*] Jack!

AUSTIN. I mean what I say!

JINNY. [*In tears.*] That — that you — you don't love me?

AUSTIN. That is not what I said, but I tell you now that since I first began to care for you, never have I loved you so little as I do to-night.

JINNY. [*With an effort at angry justification.*] And suppose I tell you it is your own fault, because you haven't treated me —

AUSTIN. [*Interrupting her.*] Like a *child*, instead of a *woman!*

JINNY. No, because you've kept part of yourself from me, and that part you've given —

AUSTIN. For God's sake, stop! [*A pause* — JINNY *is now thoroughly frightened; slowly she comes to her senses.*] Do you *want* a rupture for

good between us? [*No answer.*] Can't you see what I tell you is true? That I can't bear any more to-night? That if you keep on you will rob *me* of every bit of love I have for you, just as you've already robbed me of the woman I thought you were?

JINNY. "Already!" No, no, Jack, don't say that. Oh, what have I done!

[*She cries.*

AUSTIN. You've done something very serious, and before you do more — [*Speaking hardly.*] — I think we'd better not stay in this evening; it would be wiser for both of us if we went out somewhere.

JINNY. No, I couldn't go out feeling this way! I've hurt you, hurt you terribly! Oh, why do I do it? Why can't I help myself?

AUSTIN. I think one more scene to-night

would finish things for us. I *warn* you of that, Jinny —

[*He goes to the desk and sits at it, looking blankly before him. She comes slowly, almost timidly, behind his chair.*

JINNY. No, don't say it! don't say it! Try to forgive me — oh, Jack, I hate myself, and I'm so ashamed of myself! I know I've disappointed you awfully, awfully! You *did* idealize me; I knew it when you married me, but I told you then I wasn't worth your loving me, didn't I? I never pretended to be worthy of you. I always knew I wasn't.

AUSTIN. Hush!

JINNY. It's true! it's only too awfully true. But do you remember how you answered me then when I told you I wasn't worth your loving me?

AUSTIN. [*Coldly and without looking at her.*] No.

JINNY. You took me in your arms and held me so I couldn't have got away if I'd wanted to — which I didn't — and stopped the words on my lips with your *kisses.* [*Her throat fills. He makes no reply. She goes on very pathetically.*] *How I wish* you'd answer me that way now!

AUSTIN. Whose fault is it?

JINNY. Oh, mine! *mine*! I know it. *You* don't know it one-half so well as I! I love you better than anything in the world, love everything of you — the turn of your head, the blessed touch of your hand, the smallest word that comes from your dear lips — the thoughts that your forehead hides, but which my heart guesses when I'm sane! And yet, try as hard as I can, these mad fits take hold of me, and although I'd willingly *die* to save you *pain,* still *I, I* myself, hurt and wound you

past all bearing! It doesn't make any difference that *I* suffer too! *I ought* to! I deserve to — you *don't!* Oh, no! I know I'm a disappointment and a failure!

[*Her eyes fill-up with tears and her voice breaks.*

AUSTIN. [*He turns to her.*] No, Jinny, not so bad as that, only I thought you were *big* — and you're *so little*, oh, *so small!*

JINNY. Yes, it's true; I'm small — I'm *small!* Oh, I'd like to be big, too! I want to be noble and strong, but I'm not — I'm as weak as water — only it's *boiling* water! I want to be Brunhilde, and I'm only Frou Frou! Yes, I'm little; but I *love* you — *I love you!*

[*She sinks on to a stool beside him. A moment's pause.*

[*With a trembling voice.*

You don't mind my sitting here?

AUSTIN. No —

[*Very quietly, he places his arm about her neck, his hand on her shoulder. She quickly steals up her hand to take his, and leaning her head over it, kisses his hand. He draws it away and kisses her hair.*

JINNY. [*Timidly, very softly.*] You forgive me?

AUSTIN. [*With a long sigh.*] Yes.

JINNY. [*Bursting into tears and burying her face upon his knees.*] Thank you — thank you — I know I don't deserve it — I don't deserve it — I don't deserve it!

AUSTIN. [*Softly.*] Sh! —

[JINNY *half turns and looks up at him.*

JINNY. [*Very, very quietly.*] You forgive me — but still — yes, I see it in your face, you don't love me the same. You look so tired, dear.

AUSTIN. [*Also very quietly.*] I am, Jinny.

JINNY. And — happy?

AUSTIN. I'm *not* quite happy.

JINNY. I wish I could make you so — make you love me the old way. You used to smile a little when you looked at me — Jack, you don't any more. But I mean to make you to-night, if I can, and to make you love me as much as ever you did.

AUSTIN. Good luck, dear.

JINNY. [*Brightening.*] What time is it?

AUSTIN. [*Looking at his watch.*] Nearly nine.

JINNY. I suppose it is too late for me to dress and for us to go to the theatre?

AUSTIN. Oh, yes, — and I'm too tired.

JINNY. [*Triumphantly.*] Well, then, you shall have your theatre at home! If Mahomet won't go to the mountain, the mountain must go to your lordship!

AUSTIN. I don't understand!

JINNY. Well, just wait — [*She blows her nose.*] — till I bathe my face and eyes a little; I feel rather bleary! [*Starting to go, she stops and turns.*] Good-by?

[*Questioningly.*

AUSTIN. [*Quietly.*] Good-by.

JINNY. [*Who wanted him to call her to him and kiss her.*] Oh, very well! but I'll *make* you smile yet and *kiss* me of your own accord to-night — you'll see!

[*She goes out Left.*

[*She is heard singing in her room.* AUSTIN *goes to the desk and after a long sigh he begins to write.*]

AUSTIN. [*Writing.*] Dear Ruth. The satisfaction of the visit to Brooklyn prevents me from being disappointed at having missed your telegram till

too late to go to your house to-night. My heart aches for the blow you must have this evening, but please God you will bear it bravely. The man who loves you is not bad, but he has been weak. However, I feel once he can shake off the burden of his present marriage, you will never have cause to complain of him again. And if your future happiness lies truly in his hands, it will be safe there.

JINNY. [*Calls from her room.*] Are you ready?

AUSTIN. Yes.

[*He stops writing.*

JINNY. In your orchestra chair?

AUSTIN. Yes.

JINNY. What will you have, tragedy or comedy?

AUSTIN. [*Smiling.*] Shall we begin with tragedy?

JINNY. All right.

AUSTIN. [*Continues to write.*] So far I have been able to keep Jinny in absolute ignorance, but I fear the blow must fall upon her soon, and I dread to think of what she, too, will suffer. Help me to keep it from her as long as we can, won't you?

[JINNY *comes back; she has changed her dress to a loose negligée gown, with a red turban on her head; she brings two sheets with her.*

JINNY. Excuse me one minute while I set the stage! [*Moving toward each other the big arm-chair and the sofa, she covers them with the sheets.* AUSTIN *turns from his letter on the desk, to watch.*] Uncle Tom's Cabin, Act Four! [*She goes out only for a moment, and reënters, wearing a man's overcoat, with a pillow tied in the middle with a silk scarf, eyes, nose, and mouth made on it with a burnt*

match.] Eliza crossing the ice! Come, honey darling! [*To the pillow.*] Mammy'll save you from de wicked white man! [*Jumping up on the sofa, and moving with the springs.*] *You* ought to do the bloodhounds for me, Jack! Excuse me, but you look the part! [AUSTIN *watches her, not unamused, but without smiling.*] Hold tight to Lize, honey, and don't be afeerd o' dat big black man over dah — dat's Uncle Tom. [*Crossing to the arm-chair.*] Don't be afeerd, honey; it's Lize dat's cuttin' de ice this time. [*She throws the pillow away and drags off the two sheets.*] Oh, I can see this is too serious for you!

[*She starts singing a cakewalk and dances across the room until she reaches him, where she finishes.*

AUSTIN. Very good, Jinny! I'm sure we couldn't have seen better at the theatre.

JINNY. Ah! You're getting yourself again! — Darling! Come! — Come! — come to the pianola and you shall have the sextette! It's in there ready; I heard mother struggling with it. You don't suppose she has designs upon the Casino, do you? Now — ready?

[*He goes to the pianola and starts to play the sextette from "Florodora." She runs to the opposite side of the room and begins to sing and dance, crossing to* AUSTIN *as he plays.*

AUSTIN. [*After a few moments.*] But I can't see you and play at the same time; I don't like it!

JINNY. [*Delighted.*] You *want to see me*, do you?

AUSTIN. Of course I do!

JINNY. Jack! [*Delighted.*] Well, then, turn round!

[JINNY, *hurrying the time of the song, turns it into a regular skirt dance. She dances delightfully and* AUSTIN *cannot resist her charm. His face lightens, he smiles, and love comes into his eyes.* JINNY *sees and dances and sings all the better till she reaches him.*

AUSTIN. [*Rising, he takes her into his arms.*] You adorable Jinny!

JINNY. Ah, Jack! You're smiling again and — *you love me!*

[*Clasping her arms about his neck.*

AUSTIN. Yes! Is the theatre finished?

JINNY. No, only the first act. [*He sits in the big armchair,* JINNY *on his knee.*] I'm *tired!* [*He kisses her. There is a pause. There is a knock on the door at Right.*] Oh, hang it! [*Knock repeated.*] *Don't* answer it! We haven't half made up yet!

AUSTIN. But we must answer it, dear.

JINNY. [*As she rises unwillingly.*] I don't see why — I should have let her knock till she went away.

AUSTIN. Come in!

[MAGGIE *enters with a letter.*

JINNY. What is it, Maggie?

MAGGIE. A note from Miss Chester, m'm, and she's downstairs herself waiting for an answer.

JINNY. For *me?*

[*Taking the letter.*

MAGGIE. No, m'm; I think she said it was for *Mr.* Austin.

JINNY. *Oh!* — You may wait outside for the answer, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes, m'm.

[*She goes out.*

JINNY. [*Slowly goes to* AUSTIN *and gives him*

the letter, lightly.] I see now why you were so anxious to let Maggie in. Perhaps you were expecting this.

AUSTIN. Jinny! [*Holding her by the hand and trying to pull her over to him.*] Come, I'll give you a kiss for the letter.

JINNY. No, thank you, I don't want kisses that are given by you for letters from Ruth Chester. Yes! do kiss me! [*He kisses her.*] I *won't* be jealous! *I won't be!* [*Clinching her teeth.*] See, I'm not jealous a bit! Read your old letter!

[AUSTIN *opens the note and reads it. As he does so* JINNY *has passed on to the desk and sees* AUSTIN'S *unfinished letter to* RUTH, *which after a little hesitation she picks up and reads.* AUSTIN, *having read* RUTH'S *note, looks up thoughtfully a second, and then re-reads it.* JINNY *is furious over what she*

reads. As she finishes she gives a little cry from the very depths of her heart.

JINNY. Oh, *Jack!*

AUSTIN. What is it?

JINNY. Nothing!

[*She sinks by the desk, crushing the letter in her hand. She looks over at him, and then down at the letter, and then back at him.*

AUSTIN. Maggie!

JINNY. [*Rising suddenly. She speaks with a voice trembling with only half-contained emotion and passion.*] I told her to wait in the hall; may I read it?

[*Holding out her hand for the letter.*

AUSTIN. Now look here, Jinny, — I always let you read everything, don't I?

JINNY. [*Hiding his letter behind her back.*] Yes. [*Holding out her other hand.*] Give it to me!

AUSTIN. Now begin to show that you really are going to turn over a new leaf, and that your love is going to have perfect confidence, and don't ask to see this letter.

JINNY. But I *do* ask to see it!

AUSTIN. Then this time I must refuse you!

JINNY. What! is it even more compromising than *your* letter to her?

AUSTIN. What letter? [*Looking first on the desk, he looks across at her and sees it in her hand. He is angry, but also frightened for fear it has told her her brother's secret.*] And you've read it?

JINNY. It lay open on the desk there, and anyway the end justifies me!

AUSTIN. [*In an agony.*] What does it tell you? I forget what I wrote!

JINNY. It tells me that my jealousy all along

has been right, that I've been a fool to let you blind me!

AUSTIN. [*With a great sigh of relief.*] Is that all?

JINNY. [*Beside herself.*] "Is that all!" Isn't that enough? Dear God, isn't that enough? That there's an understanding between you and Ruth to get rid of *me!*

AUSTIN. If it tells you that, the letter lies! Give it to me!

JINNY. No! *I'll* read it to you! [*Reads with bitter emphasis.*] "The satisfaction of the visit to Brooklyn prevents me from being disappointed at having missed your telegram till too late to go to your house to-night!" So — you and she went to Brooklyn, did you, and that's why you came back too late to go to the theatre with me? You *cheat!* [*She screams in her mad*

ness. A pause.] Why don't you answer — why don't you say something?

AUSTIN. Because if I speak as I feel, I'm afraid of saying something I'll regret all my life!

JINNY. You don't deny, then?

AUSTIN. Yes! that is due to Ruth. Whatever you may feel about *me*, you have no *right* to *insult* her!

JINNY. Oh, *there's more to* the letter!

AUSTIN. Jinny, don't you see what you're doing?

JINNY. Yes, I'm getting at the truth at last! [*Reads.*] "My heart aches for the blow you must have this evening! The man who loves you — "

AUSTIN. You shan't read any more; you're mad now!

[*Tearing the letter away from her.*

JINNY. I don't need the letter, the words are burning in here! [*Pressing her hands to her forehead.*] "The man who loves you isn't bad, only weak. However, I feel once we can shake off the burden of *this present marriage*" — oh! you — you *brute* to say that! — "you will never have cause to complain of him again! So far I have been able to keep Jinny in perfect ignorance, but I feel the blow must fall upon her now — "

[*Interrupted.*

AUSTIN. Shall I tell you *the truth?*

JINNY. You don't have to; I've found it out for myself!

AUSTIN. [*In weariness, in disgust, in utter hopelessness.*] No! what's the use. You've done it now — let it go! Let it all go — the whole thing! What's the use! — it's finished! — [*A knock on the door at Right.*] Come in!

[*Maggie enters and closes the door behind her.*

MAGGIE. Please, sir, Miss Chester came upstairs and made me knock again to see if there was an answer and if you will see her now or not.

JINNY. [*Suddenly—aflame with her idea.*] Yes! Maggie, show her in!

AUSTIN. No, no! What do you want to do! I'll see Miss Chester to-morrow, Maggie.

[JINNY *has crossed to the door, Right.*

JINNY. Ruth! Ruth!

RUTH. [*Off stage.*] Yes? May I come?

JINNY. *Do* come in!

[*She recrosses room; she and* AUSTIN *face each other for a second.*

AUSTIN. [*In a lowered voice.*] For God's sake, be careful!

[RUTH *enters Right.*

RUTH. Jinny!

[*Going to her quickly to embrace her.*

[JINNY, *without speaking, draws away and stares at her with a look of hatred.* RUTH, *seeing it, stops short, and looks from* JINNY *to* AUSTIN *for explanation — she turns to* AUSTIN *and gives him her hand, which he takes, presses, and drops;* JINNY'S *shoulders contract at this moment;* RUTH *immediately turns again to* JINNY.

RUTH. What is it, Jinny? [*To* AUSTIN.] Surely she doesn't blame *me* in any way.

JINNY. *Blame you!*

AUSTIN. She doesn't *know.*

JINNY. That's a lie! I know everything, Ruth! I know why you followed my husband to Rome, and why he sent for you to come back here. I know that you and he were in Brooklyn

this afternoon, and that you only plan to get rid of me by some divorce, and by hook or crook to marry each other!

RUTH. No! — No! —

JINNY. Oh, you can lie, too, can you? I won't keep you waiting long! You've stolen my husband from me — take him. I won't *share* him with any woman! He's yours now, and I'll soon be out of your way!

AUSTIN. *Jinny!*

RUTH. [*To Austin.*] She must be told the truth.

[AUSTIN *bows his head.*

JINNY. Now you'll make up your story, will you? I tell you it's useless. If he wouldn't let me see your compromising letter, I've seen a letter from *him* to *you* to-night that gives the whole thing away.

RUTH. [*Very quietly.*] Your husband went to Brooklyn *without me*, as your *brother* will tell you, to see the clergyman who married me, or *thought* he *married* me to *Geoffrey Tillman* three months ago! [JINNY *looks up with a start.*] That marriage was *illegal* because your brother was already married, and Mr. Austin tried and did get the promise of silence this afternoon about the Brooklyn service, to prevent a charge of bigamy against your brother. The first marriage, which still holds good, was with — Maggie, your present servant —

[JINNY *stands immovable. There is a silence.*

AUSTIN. Geoffrey is not at your house?

RUTH. No, he left when I came on here. As I wrote you in the note I sent upstairs, I was too stunned by what he told me to answer then, and I wanted a word of advice with you. [*She turns*

to JINNY.] *I* knew what I thought was my *marriage* to your brother must be kept secret, but I could not learn why. This was my trouble, which, after your marriage, I selfishly laid on your husband's shoulders, thinking he might help me! [*No answer from* JINNY, *who stands as if struck dumb and into stone.*] Mr. Austin only learned the whole truth when we met that day in Rome. *I* did not learn till to-day that I was not honestly your brother's wife. I had to be told, because divorce proceedings are to be started at once to break — the other — marriage. [*No answer from* JINNY.] To spare me, and above all to spare you the knowledge of your brother's sin, your husband has kept Geoffrey's secret from you. You have *well* repaid him! [*She turns again to* AUSTIN.] Good-by — I feel to-night I couldn't marry Geoffrey again. He's tumbled so far off his

pedestal he has fallen out of my heart. But still — we'll see; I've told him to come to-morrow. *Thank you* from the bottom of my heart — it's full of gratitude, even if it is broken!

[*She goes out Right.*

[JINNY *slowly turns, almost afraid to look at* AUSTIN. *He stands stern, with set face.*

JINNY. [*In a low voice, ashamed to go near him.*] Can you forgive me? Can you —

AUSTIN. Ugh!

[*Crossing room for his coat.*

JINNY. I'm mad! You know I don't know what I do. But I *love you* — I love you! Forgive me!

AUSTIN. Never!

[*Taking up his coat.*

JINNY. Where are you going?

AUSTIN. Out of this house.

JINNY. If you leave me, I'll not bear it! I'll kill myself! I warn you!

AUSTIN. Bah! — Good-by!

[*Going to the door Right.*

JINNY. No! Where are you going?

AUSTIN. Out of this house *for good!*

[*At the door he turns and looks at her.*

JINNY. [*Echoes.*] For good?

AUSTIN. *For good!*

[*He goes out, slamming the door behind him.*

[JINNY *stands a moment motionless. She then cries faintly* — "Jack!" *She goes to the door and pushes it open, crying out again in loud, strong despair,* "Jack!" *There is a moment's pause. She cries out again weakly, heartbrokenly,* "Jack!" — *comes back into the room, and throwing herself down on the floor, her head resting on her arms in the*

armchair, she sobs hysterically, wildly, "What have I done! Dear God, what have I done!" *as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT IV

Scene I

Dawn of the next day. At the rise of the curtain Jinny *is by the open window, whose curtains she has thrown aside. The sky is blood-red and streaked with gold the moment before sunrise.* Jinny *is worn and haggard, with hair dishevelled.*

Jinny. [*Turning and leaning against the window.*] Day at last! What a night — what a night — but now it's morning and he hasn't come back! He means it! And it's my own fault — it's my own fault! [*She shivers. She closes the window and comes away. After a moment's pause she goes deliberately and looks at the several gas*

fixtures in the room. She then closes all the doors and locks them. She carefully draws down the shade and closes in the curtains of the window. She hesitates, then pulls aside the curtains and the shade, and takes a long, last look at the dawn. She closes it all in again. She gets Austin's picture from the desk and places it on the table near the centre of the room. She then goes to the gas bracket at the Right and turns on the gas. She lights it to see if the gas is all right; then blows it out. She then crosses to the other bracket and turns that on; she goes to the chandelier at centre, and, mounting a chair, turns on its three jets. She then sits down by the table with AUSTIN'S *picture before her, and looking into its eyes, her elbows on the table, her head in her hands, she waits.*] Oh, Jack, my beloved! I couldn't help it — I never for one minute stopped loving

you better than everything else in my life, but no more than I could stop loving you could I stop or help being jealous! Once the cruel idea has got hold of me it seems to *have* to work its way out! Everything gets red before me and I don't seem to know what I say or do! It's no excuse, I know. I've got no excuse, only I *love* you! You'll forgive me when I'm gone, won't you, Jack? You'll know I *loved* you! — loved you so I couldn't *live* without you! — loved you! — *loved* you! [*She kisses the photograph tenderly, adoringly, slowly, in tears.*] Loved — you — loved you! — loved —

[*Her head drops forward as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Scene II

The same morning, three hours later. The curtain rises on the same scene in a dull, cold, early morning light. The lamp has burnt itself out. A tiny ray of sunlight steals through a slip between the curtains. Jinny *sits by the table, her arms spread over it and her head on her arms — she is perfectly still.* Austin's *picture is before her. There is a moment's silence. Voices are heard outside, approaching door, at Right. Gradually what they say is distinguished.*

Maggie. No, sir. She hasn't been to bed; I've been to her bedroom — that door's not unlocked.

Tillman. She's been here all night?

Maggie. Yes, sir. But twice in the night, sir, I came to the door and spoke to her and she

wouldn't answer me — but I could hear her walking up and down and sometimes talking to herself.

TILLMAN. [*Calls softly.*] Jinny! [*Knocks softly.*] It's father! [*No answer.*] It looks as if she were asleep now.

AUSTIN. [*At a little distance.*] Father!

TILLMAN. I'm outside the library door.

AUSTIN. [*Nearer.*] I can't wait — have you seen her? Will she see me?

TILLMAN. She's locked herself in here. She's not been to her own room.

AUSTIN. Not been to bed at all! Poor Jinny — God forgive me.

TILLMAN. Maggie says she's walked the floor all night.

[*He knocks on the door Right.*

AUSTIN. [*Outside the door, Right, rather softly.*] Jinny! I'm so sorry! I can't say how sorry

I've thought it out through the night, and I think I understand things better. [*He waits a moment for an answer.*] Jinny, answer me! you shall be as jealous as you like, and I'll always explain and kiss away those doubts of yours, and I'll have no more secrets from you, dear. Not one! Jinny! [*As he calls there is a slight movement of one of* JINNY'S *arms. With a note of alarm.*] Father! I can't hear a sound of breathing! [*A moment's pause as they listen.*] She threatened it — she threatened it several times! [*With great determination.*] We must get into this room — do you hear me — we must get in if we have to break the door down! [*They shake the door. He calls a little louder.*] Jinny, Jinny darling — do you hear me? [JINNY *makes a sort of feeble effort to lift her head, but fails.*] Jinny, for God's sake, answer me! I love you Jinny — *Jinny!* [*Very slowly* JINNY *lifts her*

head and, with difficulty, she hears as if in a dream; she is dazed, barely alive.] She doesn't answer!

TILLMAN. See if the key is in the lock.

AUSTIN. No.

TILLMAN. Get the other keys, Maggie.

AUSTIN. *Father!* Gas! Don't you smell it?

TILLMAN. What!

AUSTIN. Gas, I tell you! O God! she's killed herself! Jinny! Jinny!

[*Beating the door.*

[JINNY *staggers up, she tries to call "Jack" — but the word only comes out in a half-articulate whisper! She tries again, but fails.*

MAGGIE. Here's a key, sir.

[JINNY *tries to go to the door; she staggers a few steps and then falls.*

[*They try one key — it does not unlock the door; they try another.*

[JINNY *half raises herself and makes an effort to crawl, but is unable and sinks back upon the floor.*

AUSTIN. Break the door in, father! We daren't waste any more time!

TILLMAN. No, this has done it!

[*They open the door and rush in. They stop aghast at* JINNY *and the oppressiveness of the gas in the room.*

TILLMAN. Jinny!

AUSTIN. Quick — the window! [TILLMAN *tears aside the curtains and throws open the window. The sunshine of full morning pours in. He then rushes to the opposite gas burners and turns them off. Kneeling quickly beside her.*] *Jinny! My wife!* My beloved!

[*He takes her up in his arms and hurries to the window.*

TILLMAN. Are we too late?

AUSTIN. I don't know. No! she's breathing — and see — see! — she knows me! — she knows me! [JINNY *smiles at him pathetically.*] Send Maggie for the doctor!

[TILLMAN *goes out Right.*

AUSTIN. Jinny, forgive me! Forgive me! Forgive me! [*She slips her two arms up and joins them about his neck.* AUSTIN *kisses her.*] Father! We've saved her! Oh, thank God, we've saved her!

[*Bringing her to big chair and putting her in it, he kneels at her feet.*

JINNY. [*Whispers faintly.*] *Dear Jack!* You forgive *me*—all my beastly jealousy?

AUSTIN. There's one thing stronger even than

jealousy, my Jinny. And that's LOVE! That's *LOVE!*

[*He kisses her hands, and*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

HER OWN WAY

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

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TO

MAXINE ELLIOTT

AND EVERYTHING IS SAID!

C. F. 1907

HER OWN WAY

ACT I. THE PLAYROOM.

Ten days elapse.

ACT II. THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Eight months elapse.

ACT III. GEORGIANA'S ROOM.

Four weeks elapse.

ACT IV. THE DRAWING-ROOM.

PLACE — NEW YORK.

THE PEOPLE IN THE PLAY

GEORGIANA CARLEY.

MRS. CARLEY . . . Her step-mother.

MRS. STEVEN CARLEY . Her sister-in-law, born "Coast," and daughter of Mrs. Carley by a former marriage.

PHILIP, CHRISTOPHER, TOOTS . . . Children of Mr. and Mrs. Steven Carley.

ELAINE . . . . . From next door.

LIZZIE . . . . . Mrs. Carley's maid.

MISS BELLA SHINDLE "The Lady Hair-dresser."

LIEUTENANT RICHARD COLEMAN.

SAM COAST . . . . Louise Carley's own cousin.

STEVEN CARLEY . . Georgiana's brother.

MOLES . . . . . Butler to the Carleys.

A FOOTMAN . . . . At the Carleys.

Produced at the Star Theatre, Buffalo, September 24, 1903, and on September 28, 1903, at the Garrick Theatre, New York, with the following cast: —

Georgiana Carley	Miss Maxine Elliott
Mrs. Carley	Miss Eva Vincent
Mrs. Steven Carley	Miss Nellie Thorne
Philip	Master Donald Gallaher
Christopher	Miss Beryl Morse
Toots	Miss Mollie King
Elaine	Miss Marie Hirsch
Lizzie	Miss Susanne Perry
Miss Bella Shindle	Miss Georgie Lawrence
Lieutenant Richard Coleman	Mr. Charles Cherry
Sam Coast	Mr. Arthur Byron
Steven Carley	Mr. R. C. Herz
Moles	Mr. Francklyn Hurleigh
Footman	Mr. B. M. Parmenter

Produced at the Lyric Theatre, London, in May, 1905, and afterward at the Savoy Theatre, London, with the following cast: —

Georgiana Carley	Miss Maxine Elliott
Mrs. Carley	Mrs. Fanny Addison Pitt
Mrs. Steven Carley	Miss Nellie Thorne
Philip	Master Donald Gallaher
Christopher	Miss Beryl Morse
Toots	Miss Mollie King
Elaine	Miss Marie Hirsch
Lizzie	Miss Susanne Perry
Miss Bella Shindle	Miss Georgie Lawrence
Lieutenant Richard Coleman	Mr. Charles Cherry
Sam Coast	Mr. James Carew
Steven Carley	Mr. R. C. Herz
Moles	Mr. Francklyn Hurleigh
Footman	Mr. B. M. Parmenter

ACT I

The nursery. Half-past two in the afternoon. A cool, delightful white room, with a frieze of children playing in the ocean spray; shelves of bright-colored books on the walls, and the months of a large calendar by Elizabeth Shippen Green framed underneath. There is a deep bow-window at the back; the principal door is at the Left, and a smaller one on the Right. Toys of all sizes, for all ages, are scattered about with a holiday air. There is a sofa on the Right and a hobby horse on the Left.

There are four charming though somewhat spoiled children, with intermittent manners, with napkins tied up under their chins, sitting around the table,

which is a little to the right of the centre of the room.

The FOOTMAN *is busy removing the plates; the butler,* MOLES, *who stands behind* PHILIP, *always takes* PHILIP'S *plate. It is* PHILIP'S *birthday.* LIZZIE *stands behind* ELAINE. *In the centre of the table is a large cake with seven candles burning on it.*

PHILIP. What comes next?

CHRISTOPHER. Soup!

[LIZZIE *and* MOLES *suppress smiles, exchanging looks of delighted appreciation of* CHRISTOPHER'S *humor.*

TOOTS. Ice cream!

ELAINE. Don't be absurd, Christopher, we've *had* soup.

CHRISTOPHER. I like it!

TOOTS. I like ice cream!

ELAINE. [*To* TOOTS.] Sh!

PHILIP. What comes next, Moles?

MOLES. I don't know, sir.

[*He goes out.*

ELAINE. T'ain't manners to ask, anyway, Phil.

PHILIP. Who cares! It's my birthday!

CHRISTOPHER. When will it be my birthday?

[*The* FOOTMAN *reënters with plates, followed by* MOLES, *with silver dish of croquettes.*

PHILIP. Here it comes; what is it?

MOLES. Chicken croquettes, sir.

PHILIP. Left overs! Had chicken yesterday! Bring 'em here first!

MOLES. No, ladies first, sir.

[*Serves* ELAINE.

LIZZIE. And besides, Miss Elaine is company.

[MOLES *serves* CHRISTOPHER.

PHILIP. That's all right. S'long it's Elaine, everything goes!

ELAINE. Phil!

[*Sliding down from her chair, she runs to him and kisses him.*

PHILIP. [*Hopelessly embarrassed.*] Don't! not in front of everybody!

ELAINE. But I do love you, Phil, and you're my beau, and I'm so glad it's your birthday.

[*Goes back to her place unashamed and contented.*

[MOLES *serves* PHILIP.

LIZZIE. You oughtn't to talk about beaux at your age, Miss — ought Miss Elaine?

[*To* MOLES *with a knowing glance.*

MOLES. I ain't discussing the sex with you, Lizzie, but I will say all the girls I've known, began talking about beaux early and ended late.

CHRISTOPHER. I heard Lizzie and Moles talking about Aunt Georgiana's beau!

LIZZIE. Sh!

[FOOTMAN *goes out with the croquette dish.*

ELAINE. Mr. Dick Coleman's Miss Carley's beau!

PHILIP. No, he isn't! Mr. Dick's known Aunt Georgiana always, they're just little boy and girl friends. Lizzie says she's Cousin Sammy Coast's sweetheart.

LIZZIE. [*Indignant, though convulsed.*] I never did!

PHILIP. Yes, you did! To Maggie when you thought I wasn't paying attention.

[LIZZIE *and* MOLES *exchange amused glances.*

ELAINE. But Mr. Coast's your auntie's cousin; and your cousin can't be your beau.

PHILIP. He ain't any relation to Auntie Geor-

giana. Mamma said so. Mr. Coast's mamma's cousin, and grandma's nephew, but grandma isn't any real relation to auntie.

CHRISTOPHER. How?

PHILIP. I don't know how, only Aunt Georgiana had a different mamma, she didn't have grandma.

ELAINE. And the same papa!

PHILIP. Not all the time, mamma had another papa first.

CHRISTOPHER. It's sort of mixy, isn't it?

PHILIP. Yes, I guess mamma and Aunt Georgy are sort of divorced sisters!

ELAINE. Oh!

[*As if that explained it.*

TOOTS. [*Beating the table.*] Lemmlelade! lemmlelade!

[MOLES *crosses to pitcher and serves* TOOTS *first, then the others*

PHILIP. Toots, you're getting tipsy!

[*The children laugh.*

CHRISTOPHER. Cousin Sammy comes to see Aunt Georgiana nearly every day.

PHILIP. Yes — he's begun to bring toys just like some of the others did.

CHRISTOPHER. [*With his mouth full.*] Hobby horse! Hobby horse!

[*Pointing to the hobby horse.*

LIZZIE. Don't talk with your mouth full, Mr. Christopher.

PHILIP. [*Shouting.*] He'll choke! He'll choke!

[*All laugh, tremendously amused.*

MOLES. Mr. Coast is a very fine gentleman.

PHILIP. Oh, I know! I saw him give you a dollar the other day, when he came to see auntie, and you advised his waiting and said auntie'd be in by five.

LIZZIE. Isn't he a case!

MOLES. He certainly is.

[*Returns pitcher to table on the Left*

CHRISTOPHER. I like Mr. Dick best. He's always taking us places and things.

TOOTS. [*Who has finished his croquette and is now ready for conversation.*] Um! Circus!

PHILIP. And not just 'cause he's stuck on auntie.

MOLES. You oughtn't to use that expression, Mr. Philip.

PHILIP. Why not! you do. I heard you tell Lizzie you were stuck on her last Sunday.

LIZZIE. [*Blushing.*] Oh, my!

CHRISTOPHER. Mr. Dick's a soldier!

PHILIP. Yes, siree! He helped stop a strike of street cars in Brooklyn. His name was in the papers!

CHRISTOPHER. He was hurted bad, and if he

was dead, he'd have a monnyment with "Hero" embroidered on it. Aunt Georgiana said so!

ELAINE. I should think Miss Georgiana was too old, anyway, to have beaux.

CHRISTOPHER. Oh, awful old!

LIZZIE. Oh! Miss Carley isn't so old!

PHILIP. Yes, she is, too! She's our old maid aunt.

ELAINE. If she wasn't old, she'd be married. It must be awful to be so old.

PHILIP. She's nearly thirty, I guess.

ALL THE CHILDREN. Oh!

[*Loud and long.*

CHRISTOPHER. You'll be deader soon after thirty, won't you?

TOOTS. [*Crying.*] I don't want Auntie Georgiana to be a deader!

PHILIP. [*Bored.*] Shut up!

LIZZIE. [*Comes to* TOOTS *and comforts him.*] Toots, dear!

PHILIP. I'm glad Aunt Georgiana's an old maid, 'cause I don't want her to leave us.

[FOOTMAN *enters and stands at the Right.*] She gave me my birthday party.

MOLES. Yes, and this whole house'd miss your aunt, I can tell you that, Mr. Philip. [*Takes away the plates.*] She just keeps things going smooth with everybody.

PHILIP. I told her I saw you kiss Lizzie on the back stairs, Saturday.

MOLES. What!

[*Gives dishes to the* FOOTMAN.

LIZZIE. He didn't! He didn't!

PHILIP. Yes, that's what Aunt Georgiana said, but I know better, and so does she, I guess!

LIZZIE. Isn't he a case!

[MOLES *goes out with the* FOOTMAN.

PHILIP. Now what?

CHRISTOPHER. Soup!

PHILIP. Ice cream! I want ice cream!

LIZZIE. Sh!

ELAINE. My mamma don't let my brothers behave so at the table.

PHILIP. Neither don't we, 'cept our birthdays.

[MOLES *reënters with a tray and plates.*

CHRISTOPHER. What is it?

PHILIP. [*Screams.*] Eeh! Ice cream! It's ice cream!

LIZZIE. Sh!

PHILIP. Go ahead, dish it out!

[*Laughs.*

[MOLES *serves ice cream to* ELAINE, *then to* PHILIP, TOOTS, *and* CHRISTOPHER.

CHRISTOPHER. Mr. Dick Coleman is gooder as Cousin Sammy Coast.

ELAINE. Aunt Georgiana is goodest as him!

CHRISTOPHER. Aunt Georgiana is gooder as mamma!

TOOTS. And most goodest as grandma.

[LIZZIE *exchanges a glance with* MOLES *and goes out Right.*

PHILIP. Grandma! Rats!

MOLES. [*To* PHILIP.] Sh!

PHILIP. [*Shouts.*] Stop, Chris! He's taking too much ice cream!

ALL THE CHILDREN. Chris! Chris!

[*They keep up the clamor, laughing and shouting, till* LIZZIE *comes back.*

LIZZIE. Children! here comes grandma.

PHILIP. [*Disgusted.*] Oh, pshaw!

CHRISTOPHER. Don't want grandma.

LIZZIE. Sh!

[MRS. CARLEY *comes in from the Right. She is a middle-aged woman, of faded prettiness and frivolous manner. Every line and bit of character has been massaged out of her face. There is a sudden, embarrassed, and gloomy silence on the part of the children.*

MRS. CARLEY. Well, children, having a lovely party?

PHILIP. [*Grudgingly.*] Yes, ma'am!

ELAINE. [*Politely.*] Yes, ma'am.

CHRISTOPHER. Aunt Georgiana's party!

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, dear, it's too bad mamma is ill in bed. She says when you are all through, you may come up and say how do you do, while she kisses Phil. [*Silence.*] That will be nice, won't it?

PHILIP. [*Grudgingly.*] Yes, ma'am.

ELAINE. Yes, ma'am.

CHRISTOPHER. Yes, ma'am.

TOOTS. No!

MRS. CARLEY. We are glad you could come in, Elaine, and help celebrate Philip's birthday.

ELAINE. Thank you, ma'am!

[TOOTS *is mashing his ice cream strenuously with a spoon.*

MRS. CARLEY. Toots! don't be naughty and don't mash your ice cream up like that.

TOOTS. I like it.

CHRISTOPHER. Me too — it makes soup!

[*Copying* TOOTS.

MRS. CARLEY. Your collar's crooked, Chris.

[*Arranging it.*

CHRISTOPHER. Ouch!

[*Squirming*

MRS. CARLEY. Phil, shall grandma cut your cake for you?

PHILIP. No, ma'am, Auntie Georgiana's going to cut it.

MRS. CARLEY. Oh, very well. How's your mamma, Elaine? Is she going to the big ball to-morrow?

ELAINE. Yes, ma'am.

MRS. CARLEY. We feel dreadfully. Philip's mamma's illness prevents our going.

ELAINE. Mamma said you weren't invited.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Pats* PHILIP *on the head, to his great disgust and discomfort.*] Your mamma had better mind! Your mamma is mistaken! Good-by, children, grandma is sorry she can't stay and have a good time with you. I am going to call, Elaine, on the Countess of Worling, Mrs. Tom Cooley's daughter. I don't think your mother knows them. Good-by, dears, enjoy yourselves.

[*She goes out Left*

[*Silence till the door is well shut behind grandma, and then the children break out with shouts, all of them, of* "Good-by, Grandma. Good-by," *repeated ad lib. Then they calm down.*

PHILIP. Bully! Grandma's gone!

CHRISTOPHER. Ice cream!

ALL THE CHILDREN. More ice cream! Ice cream!

PHILIP. Let's see.

[MOLES *hands him the ice cream dish.*

CHRISTOPHER. [*To* PHILIP.] Can I have some more, or will it make me sick?

PHILIP. [*Serves the children.*] No, there's plenty. When there isn't enough, mamma always says it will make us sick.

CHRISTOPHER. And papa — when we have company unexpected, and there isn't enough of anything, papa always says F.H.B.

PHILIP. F.H.B.

ELAINE. Why?

CHRISTOPHER. He says it means Family Hold Back, and we all have to say "No, thank you," when it comes around! Do you like grandma, Phil?

PHILIP. Naw! Grandma's no good.

[MOLES *goes out with the empty ice cream dish.*

TOOTS. No good, grandma!

[*A knock outside the door Left.*

GEORGIANA. [*Outside.*] Hello! Hello!

PHILIP. [*Delighted.*] Aunt Georgiana!

ALL THE CHILDREN. Aunt Georgiana!

GEORGIANA. [*Outside.*] Is this a private room at Sherry's, or may an old maid aunt come in?

ALL. No! Yes! Come in — come on in!

[*They clatter on the table with their spoons, and*

shout "Hurrah! Aunt Georgiana!" *as* GEORGIANA *enters. She is a beautiful creature, about thirty, and in the very height of health and spirits — an American Beauty rose the moment before it opens. She is flushed after her quick walk in the bracing, sunshiny winter's day. No wonder the children — and others — adore her!*

GEORGIANA. What a good time!

CHRISTOPHER. Oh, we're having the beautifulest time, Auntie!

PHILIP. Great!

ELAINE. Perfectly lovely!

TOOTS. Um! Ice cream! Lots!

GEORGIANA. That's good! Stuff all you can, Toots! Are you ready to cut the cake?

ALL THE CHILDREN. Yes! Yes!

PHILIP. We waited for you.

CHRISTOPHER. We wouldn't let grandma.

[GEORGIANA *drops her furs on the sofa and then comes to the table.*

GEORGIANA. There's a ring in it. Whoever gets it will be married in a year.

[*Starts to cut the cake.*

TOOTS. I want the ring!

PHILIP. Hush up, you're only a baby!

[*A loud knock on the door Left.*

GEORGIANA. Oh, yes, I forgot. Cousin Sam wants to wish you many happy returns, Philip. May he come in?

PHILIP. Pshaw! Another man!

CHRISTOPHER. [*In a "stage whisper" to* ELAINE.] He's the one — auntie's sweetheart!

GEORGIANA. [*Amused.*] Nonsense, Christopher, that's silly talk. Stop that for good! [*Loud knocks repeated. To* PHILIP.] May Cousin Sam

come in? [PHILIP *nods.*] All right, he's got some presents! Come in, Mr. Coast.

[COAST *comes in and goes straight to* PHILIP. SAM COAST *is a tall, slender, but strong-looking man, rather "raw-boned." He is dressed most fashionably and most expensively, — over-dressed, in fact, and yet not too vulgarly. A man of muscle and nerve, who makes his own code and keeps his own counsel.*

COAST. Shake, Phil.

[*Shakes his hand.*

PHILIP. [*His hand hurt.*] Golly! He can squeeze, can't he, Aunt Georgiana?

GEORGIANA. Well, really! Miss Elaine Jackson — Mr. Coast.

ELAINE. [*Embarrassed, rises, and curtseys.*] How do you do?

COAST. Pleased to make your acquaintance. Hello, rest of you.

CHRISTOPHER and TOOTS. Hello!

CHRISTOPHER. Are you Auntie Georgiana's beau?

COAST. Yes!

GEORGIANA. Chris!

CHRISTOPHER. Lizzie says so!

LIZZIE. I never!

TOOTS, CHRISTOPHER, and PHILIP. Yes, you did! You did too! You did too!

LIZZIE. [*To* GEORGIANA.] I never did, miss!

PHILIP. Yes you did, you did too!

GEORGIANA. I hope you didn't, Lizzie. You may leave the children with me now.

LIZZIE. Yes, ma'am.

[LIZZIE, MOLES, *and* FOOTMAN *go out at Right, each taking some plates, etc.*

GEORGIANA. [*To* COAST.] I hope you don't mind.

COAST. Of course I don't. It's true as far as I'm concerned.

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing.*] It's not!

COAST. Listen, will you bet?

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing.*] Not before the children!

PHILIP. Come on, let's cut the cake!

GEORGIANA. Blow out the candles!

[*All the children blow out the candles and then get down from the table.*

COAST. And here's my contribution to the party.

[*Brings out six big German mottoes from his pocket, and goes to table with them.*

GEORGIANA. [*In pretended excitement.*] What? Mottoes!

ALL THE CHILDREN. [*In delighted chorus.*] Oh, mottoes!

PHILIP. Are those the silver mines?

COAST. No! Why?

[*Laughing and handing the mottoes around, while* GEORGIANA *cuts the cake.*

PHILIP. I heard grandma say the other day, you had pockets full of silver mines.

GEORGIANA. The cake's ready!

[*All take a piece of cake. The children line up and down Centre from Right to Left:* ELAINE, TOOTS, PHILIP, CHRISTOPHER.

COAST. Your motto!

[*Handing one to* GEORGIANA.

GEORGIANA. One for me too! Oh, thank you!

COAST. Certainly, because I want a bit of cake. I'm after that ring.

[*Goes up back of table for cake.*

GEORGIANA. Don't anybody swallow the ring.

[*All eat the cake and now speak with their mouths full.*

CHRISTOPHER. I haven't got it yet, Auntie.

ELAINE. Nor I.

GEORGIANA. Don't talk. Everybody eat till some one gets it!

TOOTS. [*Crying.*] I can't eat my cake! I can't eat my cake!

GEORGIANA. Why not, dear?

TOOTS. 'Cause I haven't got no place! I haven't got no place to put it!

[*Crying.*

PHILIP. He's full up!

GEORGIANA. Never mind, Toots, dear, you shall have a piecé for supper.

TOOTS. Will I have room then?

CHRISTOPHER. [*A sudden loud and frightened cry.*] Oh! Oh!

ALL. What's the matter?

[*All gather around* CHRISTOPHER

GEORGIANA. [*Frightened.*] What is it, Chris?

CHRISTOPHER. [*Screaming.*] Oh!

GEORGIANA. What is it, dear?

CHRISTOPHER. I've swallowed it!

ALL. What?

CHRISTOPHER. I've swallowed the ring!

ELAINE. That isn't fair!

PHILIP. Just like Chris, 'fraid some one else'd get it.

GEORGIANA. No, Chris, dear! [*To* COAST.] What will we do?

COAST. Chris has made a mistake, here is the ring! [*Finding it in his own piece of cake.*] There weren't two, were there?

GEORGIANA. No, that's the one!

CHRISTOPHER. [*Smiling and greatly relieved.*] Oh! I guess I 'magined it, then.

GEORGIANA. [*Affectionately pretending to shake*

him.] Well, young man, you can imagine yourself spanked for giving us all a fright. Now, come along, the mottoes. [*To* COAST.] Of course the ring wasn't meant for you. What are you going to do with it?

COAST. Keep it.

GEORGIANA. No, you mustn't; it's the children's!

COAST. Philip, may I keep the ring?

PHILIP. [*On the hobby horse.*] Yes, sir.

COAST. And I'll give each one of you a ring in place of it. What kind will you have, Elaine?

[*He makes movement towards each child as he asks the question.*

ELAINE. One big pearl with two great big rubies.

GEORGIANA. Mercy! Small order!

COAST. Very well. And you, Phil?

PHILIP. I don't want any ring. I want a watch and chain.

COAST. Good! And you, Chris, do you want a ring?

CHRISTOPHER. I want a gun!

COAST. All right. [*Writing.*] And Toots?

TOOTS. Nanny goat!

[*They all laugh.* MOLES *and* FOOTMAN *enter, answering the bell which* GEORGIANA *has rung.*

GEORGIANA. The table, Moles.

MOLES. Yes, ma'am.

[*Takes away small plates, etc.; he then goes out Right, followed by* FOOTMAN, *who takes everything else from the table, leaving only the cover and a false nose left from the mottoes.*

PHILIP. [*Crosses to* GEORGIANA *at table.*] Grandma's been up and said we were all to go and see mamma.

GEORGIANA. Go in your mottoes; that will be great fun!

ALL THE CHILDREN. Oh, yes! Hurrah!

[*Running off Left.*

GEORGIANA. Ssh! Don't shout so; remember poor mamma's headache!

[*All repeat,* "Remember poor mamma's headache" *and take hands as they tip-toe out,* PHILIP *first,* ELAINE *second,* CHRIS *third,* TOOTS *fourth, repeating* "Poor mamma's headache" *in a whisper till they are all out.*

COAST. I can't get this damned thing on. Too bad Cousin Loo's ill.

GEORGIANA. Oh, she isn't really. Louise is never perfectly well and happy unless she has something the matter with her, especially if she has nothing else to do; she's bored to-day, so she's got a headache! To-night, when there's a big ball to which she is not invited, she'll be frightfully alarmed about herself for fear of appendicitis,

but to-morrow, when we have smart company at luncheon, she'll recover like a shot! It's all right for Louise, but it's hard on my brother, who really adores her.

[*She sits beside the table.*

COAST. Adores! Say! That's the word I want to use about you!

[*Follows* GEORGIANA *to table, moves chair to front, and sits.*

GEORGIANA. Nonsense, Sam! Do you know anything about some stocks called United Copper?

COAST. Rotten! Don't touch it!

GEORGIANA. My brother had a tip this morning on United Copper and wanted me to give him some money to put in it.

COAST. Listen! don't you do it.

GEORGIANA. I wish you'd use your influence with Steven to help him.

COAST. How?

GEORGIANA. You must know how mad he is over speculation? But perhaps you don't know that he has gone through all his own money, and, if she'll let him, he'll go through his wife's next. [*Smiling.*] Then I suppose it would be my turn!

COAST. Why doesn't he keep out of it?

GEORGIANA. He can't, we must keep it out of him! Out of his blood!

COAST. There's only one way.

GEORGIANA. What?

COAST. Ruin him!

GEORGIANA. That's too anarchistic! You speculate.

COAST. But I always win!

GEORGIANA. Can't you teach him?

COAST. Listen, if I could do that, I'd be the richest man in the world before I got through.

GEORGIANA. Can't you give Steve a tip on some sure things?

COAST. There ain't any sure things.

GEORGIANA. Why, other friends of Steve are always "putting him on to something good."

COAST. And what happens?

GEORGIANA. [*Smiling distressfully.*] Well, he does lose, usually.

COAST. I guess so!

GEORGIANA. But you must often have inside information.

COAST. And how much is that worth?

[*Takes up the false nose from table.*

GEORGIANA. Well, it usually costs Steve all he has! But I thought you —

COAST. [*Interrupting.*] Miss Georgiana, you see this false nose?

GEORGIANA. Yes.

COAST. [*Putting it on.*] Well, now what do I look like?

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing.*] I shouldn't like to say!

COAST. Exactly! Well, see? That's what I'd be if I believed in tips and "inside information." If a man gives your brother a good tip, let him drop it like hot lead. People with a real good tip ain't giving it away. There's never enough to divide up and go around, — not in this world, — and inside information that gets told to a lamb like your brother is too damned outside information for me!

[*He rises and moves away, half in irritation, half in humor.*

GEORGIANA. Oh! Oh!

COAST. Pardon.

GEORGIANA. Are you as rich as people say?

COAST. Richer!

GEORGIANA. How did you get it?

COAST. I started my dough with a mine.

GEORGIANA. Why can't you put Steve into a mine?

COAST. [*Laughing.*] What's the use? he'll lose everything just as quick in Wall Street.

GEORGIANA. But I mean a good mine.

COAST. [*Coming back to her.*] Listen! I worked right in our mine with my father when I was only eight years old! That's why I ain't better educated — I worked for ten years there down in the dirt and muck!

GEORGIANA. [*Interrupting.*] And silver!

COAST. [*Leaning on the back of the chair.*] Yes, and silver. [*Laughs.*] Father's out there working yet — don't have to now, but he likes it; he ain't comfortable on top of the earth — says there's too

much room. If father'd been a man like Mackay, I guess he'd been just as rich as him to-day.

GEORGIANA. And still you won't help Steve?

COAST. T'ain't business. [*He puts back his chair and leans toward* GEORGIANA, *hand on table.*] If helping him, mind you, would get you, I might take it on. [*Humorously.*] I'd pay even the price of Steve to buy you.

GEORGIANA. [*Taking the false nose and putting it on.*] Well, I'm not for sale. [*Rises.*] But I would like to dispose of Steven.

COAST. Go on, please take that blame thing off.

[*Follows* GEORGIANA *across the room to the Left.*

GEORGIANA. No, I like it! You must understand this about my brother. [*Taking off the nose.*] He is the dearest, best fellow in the world! kind-hearted and wouldn't do a thing that wasn't straightforward in business.

COAST. But you've got to be tricky if you want to succeed in our business. I don't mind telling you right out between us, I'm tricky!

GEORGIANA. I'm sorry to hear it.

COAST. Louise was a pretty good liar when she was a kid. She ought to help her husband along a little.

GEORGIANA. That's just it! if Steve had the right sort of wife, — but all Louise wants is social position and more money.

[*She sits on the hobby horse, amusedly.*]

COAST. If Louise was like you!

[GEORGIANA *puts the nose on quickly and rocks.*

GEORGIANA. Heaven forbid! The only trouble with Steve is he's weak. He'd have been all right if he'd been a girl — or married to a president of Sorosis, or a daughter of the Present Revolution!

COAST. Miss Georgiana, take off that nose and let me ask you something.

GEORGIANA. Not at all, my dear Sammy. I know what it is you want to ask me! I'm much obliged and I won't.

COAST. You won't marry me!

GEORGIANA. No!

COAST. Why not?

GEORGIANA. Because I don't love you.

COAST. Who do you love?

GEORGIANA. That's not your business!

COAST. Do you love any one?

GEORGIANA. [*After a moment's hesitation, lies.*] No!

COAST. [*With insinuation.*] Why don't you get Dick Coleman to help Steven?

GEORGIANA. [*Taking off the nose.*] Why do you ask me that now in that way?

COAST. Information!

GEORGIANA. Dick's a lawyer. What could he do for Steven?

COAST. That's not the information I wanted.

GEORGIANA. But it's all the information you'll get!

[*Gets off the hobby horse and comes down a little.*

COAST. [*Follows her.*] Georgiana, marry me, and I'll look after Steven all the rest of his life.

GEORGIANA. Sammy, you don't want me to marry you if I don't love you.

COAST. Yes, I do. Listen! I'd risk your not loving me; there's nothing on God's earth I wouldn't do to make you love me.

GEORGIANA. That's the trouble with you men, you think you can make a woman love you whether

she wants to or not, but you can't! — neither can you keep her from loving you if she does, whether she wants to or not.

[*Throws nose away; crossing to the Left, sits in the rocking-chair there.*

COAST. I'd give you everything!

GEORGIANA. That you can buy!

COAST. Do you mean that you'd rather be dead poor than marry me?

GEORGIANA. No, I don't say that! When I've lost everything and Steven and Louise are bankrupt, and we haven't a penny —

COAST. Yes!

GEORGIANA. I might — I say I might —

COAST. Honest!

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing.*] Oh, dear, no!

COAST. I take you at your word, anyhow.

[*The children's voices are heard.*

CHILDREN. [*Off Left.*] Come on back to our room and have some more fun.

GEORGIANA. Sh! Here come the children.

[*Rises.*

COAST. Damn the children!

GEORGIANA. Sam!

[*She puts finger up,* COAST *kisses it.*

COAST. Pardon! But I don't give up! Understand — I'm going to marry you!

GEORGIANA. [*Teasing him.*] When? When?

[*The children rush in screaming.*

THE CHILDREN. Aunt Georgiana! Here's papa! Here's papa!

[*And* STEVEN CARLEY *enters Left. He is a slender, smooth-shaven, young-old looking man, his voice and body almost vibrating with nerve; a personality that so often appeals to the tenderness in women, while it*

irritates men. He brings his hat and coat with him.

STEVEN. Hello, Sam!

COAST. Morning!

STEVEN. Many happy returns, Georgy.

GEORGIANA. Oh, no, thank you! It's not for me yet, thank goodness!

PHILIP. Now let's play hide and seek.

THE CHILDREN. Hide and seek!

LIZZIE. [*Entering Left.*] Excuse me, please. Mrs. Jackson's maid is here for Miss Elaine.

PHILIP. Oh, pshaw!

CHRISTOPHER. Don't you go!

ELAINE. Oh, yes, I must! I'm sorry! [*She goes up stage with great diffidence to* STEVEN *and shakes his hand as she curtseys.*] Good-by, sir. [*To* COAST *also.*] Good-by, sir. [*To* GEORGIANA.] Good-by, ma'am, I've had a perfectly lovely time.

[*Aside to* GEORGIANA.] Phil is my beau, but I like Mr. Coast awfully much too!

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing.*] You're beginning early! Come along, children, we'll take Elaine down. Excuse me, everybody, please.

PHILIP. If you've got any good tips, papa, save some for little brother.

[*The children go out Left with* GEORGIANA.

STEVEN. [*Putting his hat and coat down on the sofa.*] He's on to his father early! Sam, any news?

COAST. No.

STEVEN. I've heard of a big thing, an absolutely straight tip, — inside information.

COAST. [*Sitting in the rocker.*] Well, don't tell it, or you'll spoil it.

STEVEN. The women are so down on my speculating, Georgiana especially.

[*Sits on the table.*

COAST. What do the women folks know about business? Why don't you keep what you do to yourself?

STEVEN. But you see my money's all gone, and I need more — only to recoup with.

COAST. [*After a slight pause.*] As I remember, you can do what you like with Louise's money.

STEVEN. But is it right?

COAST. You're too blamed afraid, that's why you always lose.

STEVEN. [*Walking up and down.*] I know it. And this is the biggest chance I've had yet. If I dared risk it, I'm sure I could make a fortune! Not in words! I know what I'm talking about, Sam. Louise would have everything she wanted — and the way she'd live then! She could

drop the social chip off her shoulders, go anywhere, and receive everybody.

[*Standing beside the table, he eats a little cake.*

COAST. Well?

STEVEN. Do you advise me to risk it?

COAST. [*Pretending indifference.*] What?

STEVEN. Louise's money?

COAST. I ain't advising anything. If it went wrong, you'd blame me to the women.

STEVEN. Is that the kind of a man I am?

COAST. [*Rises and goes to Steven and slaps him on the back.*] No, Steve, I take it back. You take a licking better'n any feller I ever saw.

STEVEN. Experience! But this thing can't go wrong! The man who told me is the head and — I told Georgiana — didn't she give you a hint?

COAST. [*After a slight pause.*] No.

[*Turns up to the window and stands there with his back to Steven.*

STEVEN. My tip's a great one—safe! Now, shall I take it?

COAST. Of course, when I feel as you do about a thing, I do it.

STEVEN. And by George, I will too!

COAST. Why not?

[*Turning and facing him.*

STEVEN. Yes! what I make's for Louise, not for myself.

COAST. I wouldn't say anything to Louise about it.

[*Comes down a little.*

STEVEN. No, she'd be sure to talk it over with Georgiana.

[*He sits by the table.*

COAST. And, say, not a word, you know, about me in all this.

STEVEN. I give you my word, Sam.

COAST. Why not let the old lady in, too, Aunt Laura, if it's such a good thing?

[*He gives a side look at* STEVEN.

STEVEN. Didn't they tell you?

COAST. What?

STEVEN. I put mother into East Mexicos!

COAST. Gee!

[*Whistles, crosses to the sofa Right, and sits on* GEORGIANA'S *furs; jumps up quickly, moves the furs, and then sits again.*

STEVEN. That was an extraordinary thing. No one knows how it happened, but she lost every cent.

COAST. But —

STEVEN. Dear old Georgiana pays the interest for me, and the old lady doesn't know.

COAST. Georgiana's a damn fine girl.

STEVEN. She is! I'll pay her back out of this coup, too, another good thing.

COAST. Fine!

STEVEN. I believe I'll go back down town now.

[*Both rise and go Left as* MOLES *comes in.*

COAST. All right. Come on, we'll go together.

STEVEN. Good!

MOLES. Please, sir, may I speak to you a minute, Mr. Carley?

COAST. I'll wait downstairs, Steve.

[*He goes out Left.*

STEVEN. Yes, Moles?

MOLES. The champagne is out, sir.

STEVEN. Order another case.

MOLES. I did, three days ago, over the telephone, and I called them up yesterday to ask about it, and they said your bill was so long oustanding they'd please like it settled before filling any future orders

STEVEN. Tell Mrs. Carley; the household bills are her affair, aren't they?

MOLES. She says there is some mistake. She gave you a check for the wine bill last month, sir.

STEVEN. Did she? Oh, of course she did. It was the day I heard about Alabama Rails and I bought a couple on margin! They're down just now. The wine people must wait.

[*Dismissing him.*

MOLES. But we've a big luncheon, sir, to-morrow and no wine.

STEVEN. Very well, then, I'll get Miss Georgiana to give you a check. I don't want to bother Mrs. Carley, she's got a headache.

MOLES. The wages are due, sir, and the trades books weren't settled last month.

STEVEN. Well, I'll attend to it all to-morrow or next day, Moles. Give me my coat, will you?

[MOLES *gets the coat from the sofa and hands it to* STEVEN.] I've been short of ready money for a little while, but things are looking up. By the way, you're a good sort; I'd like to do you a good turn. I happen to be on to something, Moles, on to something down in Wall Street. Would you like to make a little money?

MOLES. [*Brightening visibly.*] Indeed and I would, sir. I've got two thousand three hundred and sixteen dollars in my savings bank, and I've heard of how these Wall Street magnums made fortunes out of less'n that.

STEVEN. I'll double it for you! You get it for me, Moles, and I'll make it into five or six thousand for you, sure!

MOLES. Thank you, sir!

STEVEN. [*Writes in note book.*] I'll put in an order to buy for you the first thing in the morn-

ing; and you have your money down at my office by ten o'clock, can you?

MOLES. Yes, sir, I can get off in the morning. I can't thank you enough, sir!

STEVEN. Oh, that's all right, — we'll be a rich household here before we get through, Moles. They'll be telephoning us to please send in some orders for champagne!

[*Puts note-book away.*

MOLES. Oh, don't trouble about these bills, sir. I can hold off the people a little longer, and I'll order the wine in another place.

STEVEN. That's a good boy, Moles, then I won't have to bother my sister.

MOLES. Yes, sir.

[*He goes out as* GEORGIANA *and the children enter Left.*

GEORGIANA. Here's papa! Come along, now,

Steve, I've promised the children a game of hide and go seek!

STEVEN. All right, I knew father wanted to do something very much, — only couldn't think what. Of course, it was hide and seek!

GEORGIANA. Philip must be "it" first!

PHILIP. All right!

[PHILIP *goes into the corner Right, with his back to the others. All hide behind or under the different pieces of furniture* — GEORGIANA *under the table,* TOOTS *back of the rocker,* STEVEN *under the sofa, etc.*

PHILIP. [*Impatient.*] Are you ready?

[*Pause.*

CHRISTOPHER. Not yet!

[*Getting behind curtains Centre window.*

PHILIP. Now are you ready?

[LIZZIE *comes in Left, as soon as* STEVEN *hides under sofa.*

GEORGIANA. Not yet!

[*Getting under the table.*

LIZZIE. Mr. Carley, please, sir!

STEVEN. [*Putting his head out from under the sofa.*] Yes, Lizzie?

CHRISTOPHER. Don't turn round, Phil, it's only Lizzie. Wait!

LIZZIE. Excuse me, but Mr. Coast sent me upstairs to see —

STEVEN. Oh, by George, yes! [*Coming out from the sofa.*] I forgot. I must go back down town.

PHILIP. Oh, pshaw!

[*About to turn.*

GEORGIANA. Don't turn, Phil!

CHRISTOPHER. No, the rest of us is hid!

STEVEN. I'm sorry, children! Father'd a great deal rather play hide and seek, but he's got to go to work. It's just like when you'd rather play but have to study!

PHILIP. When I get growed, I shan't never do anything I don't want to.

GEORGIANA. Then you'd be the most wonderful person in the world, and they'd put you in wax in the Eden Musée!

STEVEN. [*Kissing* PHIL, *then* CHRIS, *then* TOOTS.] Good-by, dears.

THE CHILDREN. [*Dolefully.*] Good-by.

[STEVEN *crosses to the door Left.*

GEORGIANA. Never mind, I'll finish with you. Don't turn around, Phil.

LIZZIE. [*At the door Left.*] Beg pardon, sir, but Moles has been and told me what you was going to do for him, sir. Would you be considering it

great impertinence if I asked you to take six hundred dollars what I've saved, sir, and do things with it?

STEVEN. Certainly, Lizzie, send it by Moles in the morning.

LIZZIE. [*Delighted.*] Oh, thank you, sir!

STEVEN. I'm glad to do it; you've served us faithfully for some years now, Lizzie.

[*He goes out.*

LIZZIE. He's gone, miss.

[*She goes out also.*

GEORGIANA. [*Calls.*] Ready!

[PHILIP *turns and looks about the room, then begins to look under things. He sees his* AUNT GEORGIANA *first and is about to touck her, but she laughingly motions him not to and points out* TOOTS'S *hiding place.*

PHILIP. [*Finding* TOOTS, *touches him.*] You're it!

TOOTS. [*Very pleased.*] I'm it! I'm it!

[*Jumps up and down.*

CHRISTOPHER. [*Disappointed.*] Somebody find me.

PHILIP. Oh, come on out from behind the curtain — you're — easy.

[CHRISTOPHER *comes out. Meanwhile* COLEMAN *is heard calling,* "Hello, Phil, Phil," *outside as he comes up the stairs.*

PHILIP. [*By the hobby horse.*] It's Mr. Dick!

THE CHILDREN. It's Mr. Dick!

GEORGIANA. Oh!

[*Starts to get out from under the table, but* COLEMAN *enters, so she crawls back.*

[LIEUTENANT RICHARD COLEMAN *is a handsome, finely built man of about thirty-two. He is a West Pointer, is a good oarsman, a crack shot, and a good fellow all around. No finicking*

about him, no nerves. Just a sane, healthy, fine fellow.

DICK. Hello! Many happy returns, Phil. [*Shakes hands.*] Where's your Aunt Georgiana! [*Silence.*] Is she out?

PHIL. No, she's under the table!

CHRISTOPHER AND TOOTS. [*Delighted.*] She's under the table! She's under the table!

DICK. [*Laughing.*] What!

PHILIP. Hide and seek.

[DICK *looks under the table; he and* GEORGIANA *laugh.*

DICK. Good morning, are you at home?

GEORGIANA. [*Very embarrassed.*] Oh, mercy! Do go away so I can get out!

DICK. [*Tremendously amused*] Come on out!

GEORGIANA. No! I can't with you there

[*Laughing.*] Please leave the room for just one minute!

DICK. Not if I know it! Come on out!

GEORGIANA. Not for worlds! Go away, please! [DICK *shakes his head "No."*] Then I shall never come out.

DICK. Ah, but that's hardly fair, because I want to talk to you comfortably.

GEORGIANA. Well, then, come on under!

DICK. Is there room?

GEORGIANA. A cable car conductor who knew his business could seat four more people in here.

DICK. Still — I think I'm more comfortable up here.

GEORGIANA. Selfish! Go on away! [DICK *shakes his head.*] Children, if you love your auntie, go for Mr. Dick with all your might and main and push him into the hall.

[*The children shout and rush toward* DICK; *they catch hold of him.*

THE CHILDREN. Go away!

DICK. [*With mock ferocity.*] The first child I get hold of I'll *spank!*

[*The children laugh and shout and run away from him to behind the table.*

THE CHILDREN. Spank!

GEORGIANA. Ogre! Very well! After all, I'm not vain! It would take Barnum's human snake to get out of this gracefully, anyway!

[*Coming out, arranging her dress and hair.*

DICK. Have some help?

GEORGIANA. No, thank you. But still, what a horrid person you are, aren't you?

[*They both laugh.*

DICK. *You* aren't!

GEORGIANA. O dear me! Making up now

with a compliment! Well, what do you think of my birthday antics? Playing hide and seek — or, perhaps, trained elephants — doesn't interest you!

CHRISTOPHER. Lelephants! Oh, Auntie! Is the *circus* coming?

[*The children give themselves up to transports.*

PHIL *hugs* TOOTS *and repeats* "Circus."

GEORGIANA. No, darling, but this circus is going — your old-maid aunt — to put herself to rights!

DICK. You couldn't improve on present appearances!

GEORGIANA. Really! Such fine speeches! But they don't go with your manners! Would you like to join in the game?

PHILIP. Oh, yes! Hurrah!

[*Runs to* DICK, *when* MRS. CARLEY *comes in from the Left.*

MRS. CARLEY. Well! What's going on?

PHILIP. Birthdays!

MRS. CARLEY. Not for me!

GEORGIANA. Don't you want to play hide and go seek, mother?

MRS. CARLEY. I'm playing it all the time with old age! That's enough!

GEORGIANA. Well, excuse me, please, while I repair damages.

[*She goes out Right.*

DICK. [*Calls.*] Come back.

CHILDREN. [*Calling.*] Come back!

MRS. CARLEY. I want the children for a few minutes.

THE CHILDREN. [*Disappointed.*] Oh, Grannie!

[*She goes to children and drives them off Left ahead of her.*

THE CHILDREN. Oh, Grandma!

MRS. CARLEY. Mrs. Vale is downstairs with the twins, to wish Phil many happy returns.

[*The children go out Left unwillingly.* MRS. CARLEY *comes back.*

DICK. Going to spoil our game, Grandma?

MRS. CARLEY. Don't you grandma me! You're old enough for me to marry you.

DICK. Help!

MRS. CARLEY. Don't worry! Having lost two good husbands, I'm not going to risk losing a third.

DICK. I breathe freely once more.

MRS. CARLEY. I thought Sammy Coast was here.

DICK. Not since I came. He seems a clever chap!

MRS. CARLEY. We think so, and we hope so. He adores Georgiana.

DICK. Oh!

MRS. CARLEY. Huh! huh! [DICK *walks away.*] What do you say to that match?

DICK. You don't mean? —

[*Turns to* MRS. CARLEY.

MRS. CARLEY. Looks like it! It would be a fine thing for both of them. Sam could give her a fortune, and Georgiana give him a big position.

DICK. But —

MRS. CARLEY. He's crazy about her! Comes here every day — follows her like a dog.

DICK. But it isn't —

MRS. CARLEY. [*Interrupting.*] Not yet, but we don't dare breathe! And we're on tiptoe for the final word.

DICK. What does Steven say?

MRS. CARLEY. Delighted, of course. [*Walks away a little.*] I hope you haven't brought Steve any tips to-day.

DICK. [*Laughing.*] No!

MRS. CARLEY. Thank goodness! He doesn't seem to have had any this week and the house has been fairly quiet! [GEORGIANA *comes back.*] I must go to Mrs. Vale. [*Goes out.*]

GEORGIANA. Mother looks pleased.

DICK. She's never very depressed, is she?

GEORGIANA. Yes, sometimes, — in the daytime! It's largely a matter of frocks and bonnets, and depends sometimes on the exact color of her hair.

DICK. I often wonder that you keep on living with Mrs. Carley and Louise. They can't help being beastly uncongenial to you.

GEORGIANA. But Mrs. Carley brought me up. She did her worst with the best intentions, and you musn't forget Steve! [*She sits beside the table and* DICK *leans against it to talk to her.*] He's my own

brother, you know, and I'm so afraid Louise will finally disillusion him and spoil his happiness. I'm standing on guard.

DICK. You think a lot of Steve.

GEORGIANA. I love him better than any one else in the world. [*She adds in a very low voice.*] Almost!

[*A short pause.*

DICK. Steve comes second!

[*Pause*

GEORGIANA. [*Low voice and looking away.*] Perhaps.

DICK. I hope you don't mind my asking you these questions.

GEORGIANA. No, I like it.

DICK. I don't want you to tell me anything more than you care to.

GEORGIANA. [*Turning and half laughing.*] That's very good of you.

DICK. But I *wish* you'd tell me everything.

GEORGIANA. My dear Dick, there isn't anything more for me to tell.

DICK. Oh, very well, if you want to leave it that way.

[*Moving away.*

GEORGIANA. Leave what?

DICK. I mean if that's all you want to tell me.

GEORGIANA. Why don't *you* tell *me* something.

DICK. That's what I've come to do.

GEORGIANA. Have you?

DICK. [*Turns and faces* GEORGIANA.] Our regiment is ordered off to the Philippines.

GEORGIANA. Your regiment?

DICK. Yes.

GEORGIANA. [*Breathless.*] Who's going?

DICK. Who? Why, we're going, of course.

GEORGIANA. All of you?

DICK. Yes, all of us. There are two insurrections on a couple of islands that must be put down, and they want some fresh men.

GEORGIANA. But it will be awful warfare out there, won't it, unfair, cruel, unlawful warfare?

DICK. I suppose that's what it's likely to be with the natives until we teach them a thorough lesson on every one of the infernal islands.

GEORGIANA. But —

[*Hesitates, rises; they are both in front of the table.*

DICK. But what?

GEORGIANA. [*Pause.*] But your business, — how can you leave your office?

DICK. There are plenty of people who'll be only too glad to take on my clients.

GEORGIANA. But when you come back?

DICK. If the worst comes to the worst, I'll have to begin all over again.

GEORGIANA. No! Don't go — Dick! Don't go!

DICK. Why not?

GEORGIANA. [*Humorously, to cover her emotion.*] I don't want any one else to get your clients.

DICK. Oh, you were thinking of my career! That'll take care of itself if I come back — and if I don't —

GEORGIANA. Please!

DICK. They said we were a lot of dandies in the regiment, and that if it ever came to fighting, people'd see us back down!

GEORGIANA. But need you all go?

DICK. That's the glory of it! It's fine, Georgy. There isn't a single man who'll be left behind, not on any old excuse!

GEORGIANA. Splendid!

DICK. You do want me to go, then, don't you?

GEORGIANA. Yes, if it's like that, I want you to go — but — I want you to come back, too!

[*Almost breaking down.*]

DICK. Hello! I believe you're crying.

GEORGIANA. I'm not!

DICK. [*Tenderly, scarcely believing.*] Do you care so much as that, Georgy?

GEORGIANA. [*Proudly.*] Of course I care!

DICK. It's funny, isn't it — think how long we've known each other.

GEORGIANA. [*Still with a choke and a tear.*] I don't see why it's funny.

DICK. What I mean is, we're sentimental beasts — we people.

GEORGIANA. Thank you, I don't care for the way you put it.

DICK. [*Takes a long breath.*] Well, I wish you joy, Georgiana.

GEORGIANA. Much obliged.

DICK. And good-by.

[*Shakes hands.*

GEORGIANA. [*Rises.*] Not now, for good.

DICK. [*Laughing.*] Oh, no, we aren't off for ten days yet. But I wanted to tell my old pal first.

GEORGIANA. That was good of you. And you'll come in often before you go, won't you, Dick?

DICK. You bet! Every chance I get.

[*Both go up to the window. He has meant to go, but she manœuvres him to the big seat instead.*

GEORGIANA. And anything I can do for you?

[*She sits.*

DICK. [*Sitting beside her.*] Oh, I don't think there can be anything.

GEORGIANA. Oh, yes, there is always something women can do for men who go away to fight. They make things! Let me make something for you.

DICK. Can't think of anything. Got everything I want.

GEORGIANA. You're a lucky man to have everything you want — and going off to the Philippines with a jolly crowd of friends and glad you're going! I take back all my sympathy, and I wouldn't make you anything now if you asked me to.

DICK. And, by George, just when I'd thought of something.

GEORGIANA. What?

DICK. [*Laughing.*] A court-plaster case!

GEORGIANA. You can buy one in a drug store.

DICK. I ought to have some present to carry in my breast pocket; don't you know bullets are always warded off that way?

GEORGIANA. Oh, that was in the old romantic days of the nineteenth century, and then it was a

prayer book or a bunch of love letters. To-day it's much more apt to be a cigarette case!

[*The children run in, led by* PHILIP.

PHILIP. They've gone! Hurrah! They've gone!

[GEORGIANA *and* DICK *rise.*

CHRISTOPHER. They've gone! They've gone!

[TOOTS *hangs on to* DICK.

PHILIP. [*Taking hold of* GEORGIANA.] Come on, now, our game, or we'll never have it!

CHRISTOPHER. Blindman's buff!

TOOTS. Yes, blindman's buff!

GEORGIANA. [*To* DICK.] Are you game?

DICK. Just one round, and then I must be off. I'll be blindfolded.

[*Takes out his handkerchief*

TOOTS. I want to be blindfolded!

PHILIP. No! Let Mr. Dick!

DICK. [*Giving his handkerchief to* GEORGIANA.] Will you blindfold me?

GEORGIANA. [*Binds his eyes.*] To my faults?

DICK. That would be Love's Labour Lost.

GEORGIANA. How do you mean Love's Labour Lost?

PHILIP. Don't let him peek!

DICK. And whoever I catch, I kiss!

PHILIP. No, tell the name first!

DICK. No, I must play my own game, and that is to kiss her first, and tell the name afterwards!

GEORGIANA. Now, turn him around three times, Christopher. [CHRISTOPHER *does so, holding* DICK *by the knees.*] And keep away, everybody!

CHRISTOPHER. Ready!

[*All watch eagerly.* DICK *moves down stage, reaching his arms out as a blindfolded person*

does, but always with his arms too high to catch one of the children.

PHILIP. Put your arms lower!

CHRISTOPHER. Yes, you can only catch Aunt Georgiana that way!

[GEORGIANA, *happy, pinches* CHRISTOPHER'S *arm playfully.* DICK *lowers his arms for a moment, but purposely catches no one. Then he lifts his arms a little towards* GEORGIANA, *who cries out and moves, lifting* TOOTS *on the table.* DICK *follows the sound of her voice and catches hold of* TOOTS'S *head.*

PHILIP. [*Excited.*] Musn't move your hands!

DICK. Make her kiss me, then.

[GEORGIANA *leans over, holding* TOOTS *to one side, and kisses* DICK *herself.*

PHILIP. [*Delighted, calls out.*] Guess who! Guess who!

[GEORGIANA *motions to the children not to tell and moves away.*

DICK. [*Hearing the voice from where he supposes the kiss came, he takes off the bandage. He sees* TOOTS *and is disappointed.*] Why — I thought it was Georgiana! Toots! You rascal!

CHRISTOPHER. [*Trying to tell.*] But Mr. Dick, Mr. Dick!

[TOOTS *laughs and claps hands.* GEORGIANA *gets hold of* CHRISTOPHER *and holds her hand over his mouth.* GEORGIANA *and* CHRISTOPHER *follow* DICK *to the door Left.*

GEORGIANA. [*To* CHRISTOPHER, *to stop his telling.*] Sh! [*To* DICK.] Good-by!

DICK. Good-by!

TOOTS. [*Wanting to tell.*] But —

PHILIP. Good-by! Good-by!

GEORGIANA. Good-by Dick! Come soon again!

DICK. To-morrow!

GEORGIANA. I'll wait in all day!

CHRISTOPHER. But Mr. Dick, it was —

[GEORGIANA *hushes him with her hand over his mouth.*

GEORGIANA. Good-by!

DICK. Good-by!

[*He goes out Left.*

CHRISTOPHER, PHILIP, AND TOOTS. Good-by!

[GEORGIANA *bursts into tears and hugs* TOOTS *on top of the table.*

CHRISTOPHER. But it was you, Aunt Georgiana!

GEORGIANA. Don't any of you tell on auntie! You won't, will you? Let auntie have her own way.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

The drawing-room at the Carleys'. A handsome room in dark wood, with tapestry on the walls and an old portrait built in over the mantel. The furniture is gilt, Louis XVI, covered with old crimson brocade. There is a warmth about the room, a profusion of flowers, some books and magazines. A piano in the upper left-hand corner, a window with a balcony at Left. Doors Right and Left. LOUISE *and* MRS. CARLEY *are replacing the furniture, which has been disarranged. Out on the balcony* MOLES *is seen, with* PHILIP *and* CHRISTOPHER, *arranging an American flag on the balcony balustrade.*

LOUISE. Thank goodness, the luncheon's over!

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, I thought they'd never go, and I've got the Shindle woman coming to do my hair.

LOUISE. I noticed it was getting a little dark at the wrong end, mother.

MRS. CARLEY. What was it Steve said this morning? It was always darkest before blond! Well, it's lucky I'm good-natured so long as I live in this family and don't want to grow old.

LOUISE. What are they doing on the balcony?

MRS. CARLEY. Dick Coleman's regiment marches by here this afternoon.

[*She sits by a table Right.*

LOUISE. Do they start for the Philippines to-day?

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, and the President is to receive them in front of the Plaza.

LOUISE. [*Coming to her.*] Have you noticed Steve?

MRS. CARLEY. No, — has he got a new suit?

LOUISE. No, something's troubling him. [*Thoughtfully.*] I believe he's been speculating again and has lost.

MRS. CARLEY. He couldn't; he hasn't got anything more to lose.

LOUISE. [*Petulantly.*] He hasn't played with the children for a week and he hates going out so lately, — wants to refuse every invitation! Even the ones you and I've been patting ourselves on the back for getting! I can't stand it.

MRS. CARLEY. Quite right, too — if one doesn't go out, where can one go, and if we don't go anywhere, what are we to do? We can't stay home. [*Rising, she crosses to mirror on table*

Left.] I say, dear, what about having my hair a little redder?

LOUISE. Let me see! [MRS. CARLEY *faces her* — LOUISE *examines her critically.*] I wouldn't much; if you do, people will say you *dye* it.

MRS. CARLEY. I don't care what they say, so long as they don't say it to my face. Have you had yours massaged this morning?

LOUISE. Yes, why?

[*Goes to mirror and, pushing* MRS. CARLEY *out of the way, examines her face in the glass.*

MRS. CARLEY. Nothing, only I think you must have it done religiously, darling; the crow's feet are beginning to come.

[*Sits on sofa and begins to crochet on an afghan.*

LOUISE. Oh, I'm worried to-day and besides, I think our masseuse is getting careless. [*Turns, goes up to* MRS. CARLEY, *and sits on the sofa.*]

I'm going to change her; she never tells you anything about anybody, anyway.

MRS. CARLEY. I told you that the first day she came. She was positively rude the way she refused to be pumped by me about the people next door. Do you know I'm worried too. [*Rises, gives* LOUISE *her work, and again looks in the glass.*] I think my hips are getting bigger.

LOUISE. Well, my dear mother, you must have hips sometime in your life, and you've done pretty well. Look at your friend, Mrs. Brint.

[FOOTMAN *enters with tray, goes to table Right, and collects the small cups and saucers.*

MRS. CARLEY. My dear! when Sarah Brint was *married* she looked like a widow! [LOUISE *laughs.*] It made me so mad seeing the people eat everything the way they did.

LOUISE. Mamma, you're so amusing. Of course

we do have good food; we must get people here somehow.

MRS. CARLEY. And I not daring to eat a thing! Why is it nice things are all fattening?

[*The* FOOTMAN *goes out.*

LOUISE. [*Rises and comes to* MRS. CARLEY.] Does it strike you that this dress of mine makes me look too short-waisted?

MRS. CARLEY. Turn round. [LOUISE *does so.*] Yes! don't wear it again.

LOUISE. [*Irritated.*] Why didn't you tell me before lunch?

MRS. CARLEY. I didn't notice it!

LOUISE. [*Angry. Turns to mirror and then to* MRS. CARLEY.] That's just it! You don't care! You don't think of me ever! You only think of yourself!

MRS. CARLEY. [*Angry.*] That's not true. I've

sacrificed my life for you, and for what good?

LOUISE. What good! Good heavens, haven't Steve and I done everything for you, lugged you into the best position almost in New York?

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, that's just it, "*almost!*" Your husband hates me and you back him up— and keep me in the background!

LOUISE. I couldn't! You wouldn't stay there.

[*With a disagreeable laugh.*

MRS. CARLEY. [*Sits in chair left of the table.*] That's it, insult me, — but I've had enough! I've made up my mind, anyway, to leave your house and live by myself.

[*Whimpering.*

LOUISE. Oh, stop, mamma. You know I didn't mean anything. I'm sorry!

MRS. CARLEY. [*Crying.*] No, I'm in the way.

LOUISE. You're not in the way. You know I couldn't live without my darling pretty little mamma. Please stop crying and kiss me.

[*Puts her arms around her.*

MRS. CARLEY. [*Still crying.*] I haven't anybody in the world but you.

LOUISE. Don't I know that, don't I know I couldn't get on without you! There! [*Kisses her.*] Now it's all right. Come on, darling, come up and get your hair dyed.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Pleasantly.*] Sh! don't *call* it that!

LOUISE. I am irritable lately, I know it — but I see without our money even Steve couldn't get us a decent position. We might just as well face the truth. Certain people don't appreciate you and me, mamma. We aren't even acquired tastes.

MRS. CARLEY. No one ever appreciated me long. I was prettier than you were at your age, and my husbands both fell in love with me at first sight. But I never wore well.

[*She takes a magazine from the table and begins to cut the pages.*

LOUISE. I wonder if Georgiana *will* marry Sammy!

MRS. CARLEY. I wish to goodness she would.

LOUISE. I believe she's in love with Mr. Coleman.

MRS. CARLEY. No, they've always known each other.

LOUISE. Well, some people wear better than we do, that's all! and I believe she's in love with him, whether either of them know it or not.

[GEORGIANA *comes in Left with* BELLA SHINDLE. MISS SHINDLE *is a florid, buxom*

young person, pleased with herself and all the world. She carries several packages.

GEORGIANA. Here's Bella, mother.

EVERYBODY. How are you, Bella?

GEORGIANA. All your guests gone?

[*She sits left of table.* MRS. CARLEY *goes back of table, and* LOUISE *moves to the right.*

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, thank goodness! You *might* have been here.

GEORGIANA. You know I can't stand your would-be smart parties!

LOUISE. I think they're always angry when they don't see you.

GEORGIANA. Nonsense! Did you have a good time? Pick everybody else to pieces?

LOUISE. No, we all said nice things about Mrs. Lothman.

GEORGIANA. Mercy! What's the matter with her?

LOUISE. My dear, she's a perfect nonentity; she might just as well *not* exist.

GEORGIANA. [*Amused.*] Well, to tell the truth, I don't care much about her myself. She's one of those boring creatures who when you ask her how she is, really tells you!

MRS. CARLEY. *You* with fancy work! What in the world are you doing?

GEORGIANA. I am knitting a tie for Dick!

MRS. CARLEY. Good gracious. Well, I'll go upstairs and get into something *loose.* I'll be ready in ten minutes.

[*She goes out Right.*

LOUISE. I must see the children; I haven't seen them to-day.

[*She follows her mother out.*

BELLA. Miss Carley.

GEORGIANA. Yes, Bella.

BELLA. Mr. Coleman, Lieutenant Coleman, is going to the Philippines to-day.

GEORGIANA. [*Sighing involuntarily.*] Yes, Bella.

BELLA. I've got a friend going along.

GEORGIANA. In the company?

BELLA. Yes — well, I don't mind telling you — he's my young man, Miss Carley.

GEORGIANA. Why, Bella, I didn't know you were engaged?

BELLA. Well, I don't know as you'd call it exactly, yes I *would* say as we *was* engaged — though I haven't got a ring. But we're going to get married when he comes back, if hugging and kissing is binding, which I *guess*, with witnesses! He wanted to give me a ring of his mother's, but

I said "No," I wouldn't take that, it was sacred and he'd always wore it. You see it was an old-fashioned-looking sort of onyx stone with oyster pearls, and not for me — I'd rather wait.

GEORGIANA. You have an eye out on the main chance, Bella.

BELLA. Well, I wasn't born yesterday Say, all the girls was crazy about him. I met him to dancing school Tuesday evenings at Adelphi Hall and we started right in, every Sunday night to church and every Saturday to the theatre. He enjoyed Sundays best and I Saturdays, but I felt it was because church was cheapest. He's dreadful economical.

GEORGIANA. You get more attention than I do from my soldier. You at least have the consolation of knowing you're the girl he's left behind.

BELLA. 'Tain't much consolation if I get left

for *good!* Say, will you ask Mr. Coleman to sort o' look after him? Ask him to please put him in the back row when there's fighting — and keep an eye on his health. I'm afraid it's dreadful *damp* being a soldier; and do you know that man actually catches cold if he forgets his rubbers and it sprinkles?

GEORGIANA. I don't think he ought to go if he's so delicate; Mr. Coleman will take an interest in your friend, I know, if I ask him. What's his name?

BELLA. Mr. Gootch.

GEORGIANA. *Mr. Gootch!* Yes, I can remember that. But, you see, if he's a soldier he must do his duty, whatever it is.

BELLA. There's no holding him back! He's jus' as likely as not to lose his position at Snipleys, Crabford & Snipleys, too, but he *will* go! It's

surprising to see a man with such a weak chest and delicate feet, so awful brave and persistent.

LOUISE. [*Coming back.*] I bore the children to death, so I left them. What are all these bundles, Bella?

BELLA. Christmas presents. This is just the time of the year to buy, you know, you can get such bargains! and if there's one thing I think nicer'n anything else to get cheap, it's Christmas presents.

GEORGIANA. You should do like Mrs. Carley, Bella, save half of the things you get one year to give away the next.

[*She sits by the table and goes on with her work.*

LOUISE. I always do that. I get so many things I can't bear.

GEORGIANA. But you must be careful not to

send them back to the same place they came from! That *has* happened.

LOUISE. Georgiana!

[BELLA *laughs out loud and sits on the sofa.* LOUISE *sits opposite* GEORGIANA.

GEORGIANA. What have you got? Sit down and tell us.

BELLA. Thank you, ma'am. [*Delighted with the opportunity. Taking up the different parcels.*] Well, I've got an elegant pair of scissors for mother, marked down because of a flaw in the steel, but she's near-sighted, and she don't want to use 'em anyway — it's just to feel she has another pair. Scissors is mother's fad — sort of born in her, I guess, for my mother's mother was a kind of dressmaker. She didn't have robes and mantucks over her door, you know, — she was too swell for that, — she went out by the day! And this is a real bronze

Louis ink-stand for my sister's husband, only cost thirty-nine cents and hasn't got a thing the matter with it, so long as you don't see the others — if you see the others, you'll observe that there's a naked lady missing off the top part which I'm glad of anyway as I'm giving it to a gentleman, and he'll never see the others besides. And this is two boxes of writing paper; aren't they *huge! awful* cheap with a lovely picture of an actress on top — Lillian Russell in *Mice and Men,* I think, on one, and Jean Duresk the Opera Singer in *Lonegrind* on the other. The boxes 'av got false bottoms — so there ain't very much writing material, but the rich effect's there all the same.

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing.*] Bella, you're a wonderful shopper!

BELLA. And this is a copy of Homer's *Iliad* for my sister. Do you know it? Is it nice? Any-

thing like Hall Caine's works, or Mary Corelli's? She's always been my sister's favorite writeress. You see they've got a whole counter of these beautifully bound in red and gold, and only nineteen cents. But it's so hard to decide which to buy. I've about decided now to take this back and change it for *Lucille*. Which do you think my sister'd like best, Homer's *Iliad* or *Lucille?*

GEORGIANA. I believe she'd prefer *Lucille*, and besides half the fun in shopping is in the changing one's mind and taking things back, don't you think so?

BELLA. Yes, ma'am, I think so.

[MOLES *enters Left.*

MOLES. Mr. Coast to see Miss Georgiana, please.

[BELLA *rises.*

GEORGIANA. Did you say I was in?

MOLES. Yes, miss.

GEORGIANA. What a bore! Very well, Moles.

[*He goes out.*

BELLA. I'll be going up to Mrs. Carley, now.

[*Goes toward the door Right.*

GEORGIANA. Wait a minute, Bella. I want you to do something for me. Entertain Sammy, Louise, till I come back.

[*She goes out with* BELLA.

LOUISE. I never was able to entertain Sammy, but I'll do my best.

[COAST *enters, announced by* MOLES, *who immediately exits.*

COAST. Hello, Lou, how goes it?

LOUISE. Beastly!

COAST. Where's Miss Georgiana?

LOUISE. She'll be down in a minute. Sam, do you know what's the matter with Steve?

COAST. Probably he's been losing.

LOUISE. Whose money?

COAST. Everybody's.

LOUISE. But can't you help him?

COAST. No; it's not my business.

[*Sits on the sofa, putting the pillows out of his way.*

LOUISE. But he's my husband, and you're my cousin.

COAST. What's the difference? Twenty years ago, when your father was rich as Crœsus and my guv'ner and I up a stump for — tobacco, anyway, if not for bread, did he lift a finger to help us? not on your life! That lets me out! Every man for himself — and listen, if I wanted to starve I could lose a real good fortune through Steve Carley, without any outside help.

LOUISE. I told mother you'd be like that.

COAST. We're all pretty much alike; she'd recognize the Coast family.

LOUISE. If you were married to Georgiana, you couldn't ignore her brother. She isn't like us.

COAST. Well, if I could get Georgiana, [*Going to* LOUISE.] I'd be willing to do a good deal. She's the only woman I can see in this world my size.

LOUISE. So I guessed, but if Dick Coleman proposes before he goes to the Philippines, I wouldn't give much for your chances.

COAST. Listen, Lou; did you ever know me to lose anything I'd set my mind on getting.

LOUISE. No.

COAST. Well I mean to marry Georgiana, Dick Coleman or no Dick Coleman. No, I'll put it different from that. I mean to make her love me,

because, by God, I love that woman so I'd do anything, commit a crime almost, to get her.

[STEVEN *enters Left and* COAST *goes up to the mantel.*

LOUISE. Steve, aren't you up town early?

STEVEN. A little.

[*Sits Left.* MOLES *enters.*

MOLES. Beg pardon, sir.

LOUISE. What is it, Moles?

MOLES. [*To* LOUISE.] Mr. Carley, m'm. [*To* STEVEN.] Could I speak with you a few moments, sir?

STEVEN. I'm very busy to-day, Moles.

MOLES. But have you noticed sir, this morning, United Copper is lower.

STEVEN. It can't be helped — go about your business.

MOLES. But for heaven's sake, Mr. Carley —

you said yesterday if it dropped another point and we couldn't give up any more money, Lizzie and me'd both lose everything we had.

STEVEN. I'm sorrier than I can say, but there are lots of others worse off than you.

[GEORGIANA *reënters Right.*

COAST. [*Cynically to* STEVEN.] You don't mean to say you've been speculating with Moles's money.

LOUISE. Moles!

STEVEN. It was for *himself*, not me, I put him in.

MOLES. And Lizzie, sir. And we'd counted it up, how if we made all you said, we could leave service soon, sir, and we could afford a small house in the country with say *four* rooms and *one* baby — Lizzie doing her own work.

LOUISE. Do you mean to say, Steve, that your own servants have lost their earnings through you?

MOLES. Yes, m'm.

STEVEN. [*Doggedly.*] Put it that way if you like. I meant to do them a good turn.

LOUISE. But we can't let that happen; we must pay them back!

COAST. [*Amused.*] Bully for you, Louise! getting generous in your old age.

LOUISE. It would ruin us socially if it got out!

COAST. Oh, I see!

MOLES. Mr. Carley said it was *sure*, ma'am.

[COAST *laughs a rather coarse laugh.*

STEVEN. For heaven's sake, Coast! Go away, Moles.

[MOLES *goes out Left.*

COAST. [*To* STEVEN.] Are they holding on for you?

STEVEN. They said they'd give me till to-morrow to put up more security.

[*Sits Right.*

COAST. What do you need?

[*No answer.*

LOUISE. How much more security, Steve?

[*Goes to* STEVE.

STEVEN. Say a hundred and fifty thousand.

[COAST *whistles.*

LOUISE. He'd better hold on, Sam, hadn't he; what do you think of the stock?

COAST. Don't ask *me.*

LOUISE. We've got *to risk it,* anyway. Use some of my bonds, Steve.

STEVEN. Louise!

LOUISE. Yes, I mean it, we must.

STEVEN. You don't understand me — we can't use your security.

LOUISE. Why not?

STEVEN. [*Rising and half turning away.*] Not — again.

LOUISE. How do you mean "again"?

STEVEN. Your money is all there, all, already buried in it!

LOUISE. *All* my money? *All* of it!

STEVEN. Yes, I wanted to win back your mother's, I wanted —

[*Interrupted.*

LOUISE. [*Beside herself.*] You wanted! You wanted!! You wanted!!! To ruin us, that is what I should say you wanted to do! — Do you mean to say, behind my back, you've gambled away every cent I have, as well as all my mother's money!?!

GEORGIANA. No! it's not possible — Steve!

[*Comes between* STEVEN *and* LOUISE.

STEVEN. When did you come in, Georgy?

LOUISE. Georgy! [*No answer; she continues hysterically.*] He can't deny it; it's true! And it's rank dishonesty, that's what it is! You've robbed

me, you've robbed my mother, you've robbed your own children! The papers will call you a —

STEVEN. [*Interrupting.*] That's not true! I had control of your money — to do with as I choose, and I did what I thought was for the best.

LOUISE. You've never done anything for me that wasn't for the worst!

[*Walking up and down excitedly.*

GEORGIANA. Louise!

LOUISE. It's true! If I can save a cent out of this ruin, I'll take it and the children away from you! I'll never live with you again! I'll show you up to all your smart friends who've snubbed me! I'll send you to state prison if I can!

[*Sits in the armchair down Left.*

COAST. Shut up, Lou! You'd better get a little legal advice before you start on that track.

GEORGIANA. Louise!

[*Goes to* LOUISE.

LOUISE. Well, what have *you* got to say? My mother brought *you* up, was a second mother to your brother who ruined us, but you've got *your* money, I suppose. You've been clever enough to keep *your* money in your own hands, — you and he will always have enough!

[*Crying hysterically.*

GEORGIANA. *Will* you listen to me and let me say what I'm trying to?

LOUISE. [*Bursting into floods of tears, overwhelmed with sympathy for herself.*] He's broken my heart! That's what he's done; broken my heart!

GEORGIANA. [*Going to* LOUISE.] Oh, no, he hasn't, Louise, he's only broken your bank, and you don't know the difference. I want to say to

you now, — that all Steve needed was real love, and the guiding hand of a true, sensible woman —

STEVEN. [*Interrupting her, goes to* GEORGIANA. GEORGIANA *turns to* STEVE.] No, Georgy! You mustn't blame Louise! I love her and always will, just as she is. She doesn't mean all she says now — she's angry, and she has a right to be — I'm one of those men who never succeed — who never have any luck, and it's bad luck for her to have to share mine.

GEORGIANA. Well, what's done's done? But, as Louise says, my money's left.

STEVEN. Yes, but —

GEORGIANA. Mine must do for all of us.

COAST. [*Strongly.*] Excuse me, but I'll see that Louise and her mother don't suffer; *you* keep your money.

GEORGIANA. No, that's not the point, Sam. I

asked you once to give my brother advice and you refused. You might have prevented this, and now we can get along without your money. Steve won't have to go out of his own family to make up as far as he can for what he's lost out of yours.

[SAM *turns away to the mantel.*

STEVEN. Georgy! O Georgy! You're an angel! [*Hugging her and kissing her in a transport of relief.*] I'll get out of it, you'll see! I'll cover myself to-morrow. I can do that with your Croton Bonds and your Mutual Life and a couple of mortgages, and we'll win in the end, and Louise get hers back and mother too — ! [*His arm about his wife.*] It's *sure* in the end, *it's got* to be, Louise.

[*There is no response from* LOUISE.

GEORGIANA. Steven, I have a condition about my money.

STEVEN. [*Crestfallen.*] What?

GEORGIANA. It isn't to be used as you think. If I'm to help you, it must be in my own way.

STEVEN. How do you mean?

GEORGIANA. What's lost is *lost.* I have between five and six hundred thousand dollars, and we must all live on the income of that. And you must give your word of honor never to gamble in stocks again.

[SAM *comes back to front of table.*

LOUISE. [*To* STEVEN, *suddenly realizing it again.*] You let *all* my money go?

GEORGIANA. [*To* LOUISE.] I will share what I have with you.

STEVEN. [*To* GEORGIANA.] But you must let me try to get back —

GEORGIANA. [*Interrupting.*] It would only be throwing good money after bad!

COAST. [*Sardonically.*] How about Moles and Lizzie?

GEORGIANA. Don't *you* worry about them! Moles and Lizzie shall have their money back, of course.

STEVEN. But I can't do it, Georgy. It's losing — why it's like losing a million to us!

GEORGIANA. Suppose you went on speculating with my money, and it went the same way as Louise's and her mother's?

COAST. And Lizzie's and Moles?

STEVEN. But it can't — it *can't!*

[STEVEN *sits on the sofa.* GEORGIANA *sits beside* STEVEN. LOUISE *is still in the armchair Left.*

GEORGIANA. O Steve! I've heard that so often. [*A pause.*] You were always a straight boy, Steve, and you always kept your word. Your notion of

honor, it seems to me, in little things hasn't been so strong lately, as this fever of speculation grew on you, but still you are the same Steve and you've never lied about your transactions; so I have faith in you. Now let's settle this once and for all and *my way!*

STEVEN. It's very hard, Georgiana.

LOUISE. We can never all of us live on your income — not as we're used to.

GEORGIANA. That's true. Come, Steve. Give me your word never to go into another speculation and let's throw it off for to-day. Dick's coming to say good-by. Let's give him happy memories of us, at least to take away with him. [*A moment's pause.*] Come, Steve?

STEVEN. [*Low voice.*] All right.

GEORGIANA. No more speculating; you'll give

me your word — [STEVEN *rises*, GEORGIANA *rises.* STEVEN *nods his head.*] — of honor, Steve?

STEVEN. Yes!

[*Nods his head.*

GEORGIANA. Then that's settled.

[*Gives* SAM *a calm, defiant look.*

STEVEN. O Georgy! I don't seem grateful, but I am. I can't tell you! I can't say! But it's wonderful what you're doing! God bless you!

[*Puts his arms on* GEORGIANA'S *shoulders.*

GEORGIANA. [*With emotion, almost breaking down.*] That's all right, Steve. We'll begin all over again.

[*She kisses him.*

LOUISE. [*To* GEORGIANA.] I suppose I ought to thank you too.

GEORGIANA. No, don't bother. Come upstairs and have your hair shampooed. Bella must have

painted mother red enough by now; it'll rest you and do you good.

LOUISE. After all, you're no real relation of ours, and you've done a fine thing.

GEORGIANA. [*Very simply.*] Don't talk about it. I wish it were more. I realize fully what it means to your mother and you to have all your money gone. But we'll put our shoulders to the wheel and make the best of it. Come, dear, come.

[*She goes out Right.* LOUISE *is about to follow, but is stopped by* STEVEN.

STEVEN. Louise, do you forgive me?

LOUISE. No, you ought to have asked my advice — let me know.

STEVEN. But when I used to talk to you about money matters, dear, you always begged me not to bother you.

LOUISE. I don't care, this is different. Sam!

[*Nodding good-by.*

COAST. Do you mind my joining you to see the procession go by at five?

LOUISE. No!

[*She goes out Right.*

STEVEN. What procession?

COAST. Coleman's regiment.

[*He puts his feet upon small gilt chair beside the table.*

STEVEN. Oh, yes! Well — I've made a pretty big mess of things. I'm not fit to live, that's what's the trouble with me.

COAST. Oh, you must take everything in the day's work; but it's a pity she made you give her that promise.

STEVEN. Why?

COAST. [*Goes to him.*] You all can't live on the

income from five hundred thousand dollars. Now there'll be a *bust* up sure!

STEVEN. Ss! that's all I need.

[*Sits on the sofa.*

COAST. That promise of yours to Georgiana's binding, ain't it?

STEVEN. [*Looks up.*] Of course. Why?

COAST. No why.

[*A pause.*

STEVEN. You think United Copper will go up again?

COAST. If not, I know something that *will.*

STEVEN. Something you're in yourself?

COAST. Yes.

STEVEN. And you'd put me on?

COAST. Yep. I don't think there's any other way out of this for you all.

STEVEN. Sam!

[*He rises.*

COAST. It's *absolutely safe.*

STEVEN. I could get it back? *Some,* anyway, of what I've lost?

COAST. Sure! —

STEVEN. But I gave Georgiana my word.

COAST. Of course she got that promise out of you because she thought you'd lose again.

STEVEN. Yes, but my word is *my* word.

COAST. Do you suppose she'd mind, if you won, won back Louise's money, won back the girl's happiness?

STEVEN. Suppose I tell her what you can do and ask her to let me off this once?

COAST. No, women don't understand business. She wouldn't realize *I* can *know* I'd win, any more than *you feel sure* and lose.

STEVEN. Yes, it would do no *good* to ask her.

COAST. Too bad, because I'd guarantee you wouldn't lose, not this deal. Of course I wouldn't be responsible for any future transaction.

STEVEN. But I'd be satisfied with this one, if I got back my losses.

COAST. I don't say you'd get back *all*, in one deal, but a good start which might turn your luck.

STEVEN. It's always like that; I've known such cases over and over again. But I've never yet broken my word to Georgiana, — somehow or other I feel as if I did that once I wouldn't have any hold over myself.

COAST. I don't suppose you could get at her securities anyway this afternoon?

STEVEN. Oh, yes, I could. We have our deposit box together.

COAST. Don't you think she'd forgive you when it means such a lot to Louise and her mother?

STEVEN. Why shouldn't she ?

COAST. Why don't you risk it? That promise was just to keep you from losing, and this time I'll see you don't lose — so why not?

STEVEN. By George, I will! Georgiana really can't blame me when there's so much at stake.

COAST. Can you get the stuff to-day?

STEVEN. [*Looks at his watch.*] Yes, if I hurry.

COAST. All right, go ahead. I'll come to your office to-morrow at nine. Listen — I ain't supposed, of course, to have anything to do with this — and when you get it, don't go giving my tip to other chumps.

STEVEN. Oh, no.

COAST. What you do is on your own responsibility?

STEVEN. Exactly, only *you* guarantee?

COAST. That you don't lose this time. [*Looking at his watch.*] You'd better hurry.

STEVEN. Thank you, Sam.

[*Shakes his hand.*

COAST. Oh, that's all right. Say, I want to marry your sister. No objection on your part, is there?

STEVEN. Well, I should say not!

COAST. She don't seem to cotton to me.

STEVEN. She doesn't know you.

COAST. Do you think if she was up a tree for funds she'd look at me any kinder?

STEVEN. Not a bit.

COAST. Some women do.

STEVEN. Not Georgiana! Good-by.

COAST. [*To* STEVE.] So long.

[STEVEN *turns to go, but stops as* MOLES *shows* COLEMAN *into the room. The latter is dressed in his uniform of first lieutenant.*

DICK. Hello, Steven! Hello, Coast!

COAST. We gates!

STEVEN. How are you, Dick? Excuse me, I'm in a hurry. You're off to-day?

DICK. Yes, I've come to shake hands.

STEVEN. Good-by, old man, and good luck — sorry to have to go! Good-by!

[*Shakes hands warmly, with feeling.*

DICK. Good-by.

[STEVEN *goes out Left.*

COAST. [*Sitting Right.*] Oh, I guess she ain't so different.

DICK. Who?

COAST. Georgiana, she's *just a woman!*

DICK. No, take my word for it, she's not *a* woman, she's *the* woman.

[*Sits on the piano bench.*

COAST. 'Spose she likes money and nice things always about her?

DICK. She's always had them, — and always would if I could help give them to her.

COAST. Huh, huh! Well — say, Steve's got himself in a devil of a hole! Speculated with his wife's money — and they're broke.

DICK. Good God, what do you mean?

[*Rises.*

COAST. What I say. Steve is one of those good-hearted gulls who's a blame slob on the money market, and he's gone under to the extent of Aunt Laura's and Louise's *spondulix*, that's all.

[*He is rather amused.* DICK *goes back of table, puts his hat on it.*

DICK. What are they going to do?

COAST. Georgiana wants to pony up like a brick and keep the whole lot!

DICK. Just like her!

COAST. Oh, of course, I'll see Georgiana don't really lose by it in no way in the end.

DICK. You *will?*

COAST. Why of course!

DICK. She isn't going to let Steve speculate with her money, is she?

COAST. Can't say.

[*A pause.*

DICK. Look here, I'd like to help Steve myself, if I thought I could protect Georgiana. I'll let Steve have some money. You needn't say anything to anybody. How much will see him through?

COAST. That's real good of you, but I couldn't let outsiders help 'em.

DICK. I'm not exactly an outsider; and the truth is, Coast, I'd give anything to have the right

to help Georgiana. [*A silence.*] Look here. I'm going to ask you a question, straight out!

COAST. Fire ahead!

[*Looks at* DICK *with a perfectly blank face.*

DICK. Anything between you and Georgiana?

COAST. [*After a short pause.*] There is —

DICK. Mrs. Carley hinted as much.

COAST. [*Unflinchingly.*] I'm — er — I'm going to marry Georgiana.

[*A pause.* COAST *looks* DICK *in the eye, then away.*

DICK. Congratulate you, Coast! [*Shakes his hand.*] She's worth even more than you can give her!

COAST. That's right!

[COAST *goes out on the balcony and whistles "Congo."* DICK *walks away and turns his back.* DICK *goes to the mantel and takes up*

a picture of GEORGIANA, *looks at it, takes it out of the frame, and seeing that* COAST *isn't observing, puts it in his breast pocket. He turns round with a pathetic sort of half-laughing exclamation to* COAST.

DICK. I say, Coast. [COAST *comes in from the balcony.*] I've been in love with Georgiana for years.

COAST. That don't surprise me!

[COAST *sits on the piano bench.*

DICK. I never realized it until the other day, when I found I was going to leave her, and — perhaps — not coming back, and then I found boy friendship had sort of grown up into a man's love — I almost told her — [*Pause.*] I wonder if I'd found it out sooner — before you came along —

COAST. No use shutting the stable door *after* the horse is swiped!

DICK. I shan't be able to say exactly what I

wanted to to Georgiana — but that's — your luck — I guess the quicker I can say good-by and get out, the better for me —

COAST. Listen — don't say anything to Georgiana about her and me, will you, unless of course she tells you — we're not talking about it yet.

DICK. *I* don't care mentioning it, thank you.

[MRS. CARLEY *and* GEORGIANA *come in Right and meet* DICK.

MRS. CARLEY. We're so sorry to say good-by, Dick — will you have some tea?

DICK. No, thanks.

COAST. Hello, Auntie.

[MRS. CARLEY *goes to the sofa and sits with her crocheting.*

GEORGIANA. Dick!

[*Shaking his hand — a second long. They look into each other's eyes.*

MRS. CARLEY. Isn't he fine in his uniform?

DICK. [*Embarrassed.*] I hadn't time to change before we start.

MRS. CARLEY. Louise asks me to give her farewells; she's got a bad headache and is being shampooed — she's *too* disappointed not to see you.

DICK. I'm sorry she's in her usual health.

MRS. CARLEY. Got it from her father; we didn't expect him to live a year when I married him, but he surprised us all — and I tell Louise she'll outlive me yet. How are you, Sammy?

[*Drops her worsted;* COAST *picks it up and gives it to her.*

COAST. All right, only I need a shave.

[*He sits Left.*

MRS. CARLEY. Well, you shouldn't talk about it! You need a lot of coaching.

GEORGIANA. [*Aside to* DICK.] Stay; I want to speak to you alone.

DICK. All right, old girl, I think I know why.

MRS. CARLEY. Why don't you all sit down?

GEORGIANA. He hasn't much time.

DICK. I haven't long to stay. I must be at the armory by a quarter to four.

GEORGIANA. You march by here at four, don't you, on your way to the 42d St. Station?

DICK. Yes, rather a bore; but the Governor insists, and Roosevelt comes on to receive us at 59th St.

GEORGIANA. We oughtn't to keep Dick, then, mother; we ought to say good-by at once.

[*They all rise.*

MRS. CARLEY. Very well, speed the parting guest! Good-by, Dick, we'll watch the papers to see what brave things you do, and don't fall in

love with any of the *décolleté* young nigger ladies we read about.

DICK. Good-by, Mrs. Carley. [*They wait for* GEORGIANA *to say good-by. A pause.*] Good-by, Coast!

[*Crosses to* COAST, *who rises and shakes hands with* DICK.

COAST. Good-by! Good luck —

GEORGIANA. [*Pointedly.*] Good-by, Sam.

COAST. Oh, I'm not going.

[*A pause.*

DICK. [*To* GEORGIANA.] Good-by.

GEORGIANA. Good-by! [*Shakes his hand and adds under her breath to him.*] Don't go. Don't go.

[*A pause; all wait.*

MRS. CARLEY. He isn't in a hurry, after all, Georgiana; let's all sit down again.

[*They all sit.*

GEORGIANA. [*Laughing, embarrassed.*] Of course I don't want to urge you off, Dick.

DICK. [*Rising.*] No, but really, after all, I think I *must* go.

[*All rise again.*

GEORGIANA. No! Mother, I want to speak with Dick alone, before he goes; you won't mind leaving us, will you, you and Sam?

[*Sam rises.*

MRS. CARLEY. [*Unwilling.*] Oh, no — Come along, Sam. We'll be on the balcony when you pass, Dick; be sure to look up. Good-by.

[*Going.*

DICK. [*Shaking her hand.*] I'll look up.

COAST. [*At the door Right.*] I'll go up and see the kids.

[COAST *looks at Dick and goes out very slowly with* MRS. CARLEY.

GEORGIANA. I couldn't say good-by to you like that — I couldn't share my good-by with mother; you understand that, don't you, Dick.

DICK. Yes, old girl, though if I had my way I wouldn't say good-by to *you* at all — I hate good-bys to people I care about.

GEORGIANA. Sit down just a few minutes.

[*They sit down by the table.*

DICK. [*Sees the tie in her hands.*] Busy making reins for Toots? What an ugly color!

GEORGIANA. Is it? Well, it's a tie for you!

DICK. Oh — I mean it's ugly for reins, but perfectly lovely for a tie — I'll take it with me.

[*Puts it in his pocket.*

GEORGIANA. I wish I could go with you.

DICK. Don't you think you're needed here just at this moment?

GEORGIANA. Has Steve told you?

DICK. No, Coast did.

GEORGIANA. Don't you think I'm doing right?

DICK. If you love him, of course, old girl, you're doing right. I think I must go now. [*Rises.*] Good-by.

GEORGIANA. No, don't go yet, please. I can't bear to have you go.

DICK. It's good of you to care so much. [*Leans against the table.*] You know only yesterday I woke up and suddenly began to hope —

GEORGIANA. What —

DICK. Nothing; I don't hope it any more, anyway! I say, Georgiana, you'll go around and see mother and father once in a while, won't you?

GEORGIANA. Of course I will —

DICK. It'll cheer them up a lot, you know — they feel so badly; it's pretty tough on them, my leaving.

GEORGIANA. *I* feel badly too —

DICK. That's jolly good of you.

GEORGIANA. And isn't it just a little *tough* to leave me? Your oldest friend almost, you know.

[*She adds this latter to cover up the sentiment which was coming too near the surface.*

DICK. Of course it is.

GEORGIANA. You haven't said so.

DICK. Still waters run deep, Georgy, and I — [*He moves away.*] really, I must be going.

GEORGIANA. [*Rising.*] No, *don't* go.

DICK. [*Looking at his watch.*] I must.

GEORGIANA. No, let me see your watch. Yes, you have got three more minutes. Please — sit down —

[*She persuades him to sit down again, and she reseats herself.*

DICK. Have your own way!

GEORGIANA. Will there be fighting?

DICK. I hope so!

GEORGIANA. Oh, but what fighting! I've read, I know — ambushes and tortures — their war is murder.

DICK. Yes, and that's why we're going out there to put an end to it.

GEORGIANA. Why need *you?*

DICK. Some one must, I as well as another; in fact, just now, I *better* than any other.

GEORGIANA. Why *you* better?

DICK. Because I want to go — I've got a restless fit, Georgiana — and want to get away from here — I want to get away from everybody.

GEORGIANA. From *me?*

DICK. Yes, even from *you!*

GEORGIANA. [*Hurt.*] Thank you.

DICK. I should think your woman's instinct would teach you why.

GEORGIANA. Well, it doesn't! and I really should be very much obliged to you if you would help my woman's instinct out.

DICK. Of course it's all right what you're going to do, only — well, I don't want to be here to see it.

GEORGIANA. But, Dick, I'm perfectly happy in what I'm doing.

DICK. Of course! but that doesn't make it any the pleasanter for me. [*Rises.*] Good-by.

GEORGIANA. [*Rising.*] And that's all, just good-by?

DICK. No, I wish you all kinds of happiness in the future and the happiest marriage in the world.

GEORGIANA. Oh, thank you very much.

DICK. [*With great effort.*] I wish you everything that's good, Georgy, old girl!

GEORGIANA. Well, I'm sure no one could ask for more; and what shall I wish you?

DICK. Wish me a big fight, and an exciting one! Wish me a chance to do something! Wish me — oh, what does it matter — wish me — "Good-by."

GEORGIANA. What does it matter? Good-by! No!

[*They shake hands; she follows him to the door.*

DICK. I must. I'll be late.

GEORGIANA. *Be* late.

DICK. [*Looking at her a moment.*] *I am* — too late. Good-by.

[*He is going out again and she stops him.*

Good-by. [*Light-heartedly.*

[*He goes out. She stands where he leaves her, facing the door. A pause.*

GEORGIANA. "What does it matter" — "wish me good-by."

[*She turns, looking straight ahead of her, gazing*

into space, realizing what it means to her. Slowly the emotion creeps into her face, she falters where she stands, and turns about to burst into tears, when COAST *comes back into the room.*

COAST. I heard Coleman go — can I talk with you a little?

GEORGIANA. [*Sitting on the sofa.*] No, Sam, I don't feel like it!

[*She cannot keep her tears back.*

COAST. [*Going to her.*] Georgy, don't — don't — I love you.

GEORGIANA. No! I don't want you to.

COAST. It don't make any difference if you want me to or not; I do, got to, it's so strong in me — won't you have me?

GEORGIANA. No! Won't you leave me alone a little?

COAST. No, I can't. Listen; I know I'm not refined enough for you — but I can get over that in time. Sure! I can get over everything for you, if you'll only love me.

GEORGIANA. No! now go away from me.

[*He kneels beside her a little awkwardly, trying to make her look at him.*

COAST. There isn't a thing in this world that money can buy I won't give you.

GEORGIANA. There are some things money can't buy.

COAST. No, there ain't — not *my* money! You'll have everything a woman can hanker after in this world — the best there is, and Steve shall have it, too, for your sake.

GEORGIANA. I can never love you.

COAST. Listen! I'll make my wife the biggest woman in the city — I'll make her —

GEORGIANA. [*Interrupting.*] Sam, stop! [*He rises.*] I can't hear any more!

[*A pause — she sobs; he waits.*

COAST. I won't stop, not till you say you'll marry me! If I let up to-day, I'll begin again to-morrow, and when I stop to-morrow it'll be to go ahead the day after! I've never failed yet in getting anything I've set after, and this is the biggest thing I've ever made up my mind to.

GEORGIANA. And this time you *will* lose. Because I can never love you. [*He tries to interrupt.*] No, let me finish. I'll tell you why I can't love you. I'll tell you, only just you, Sam, remember that. I could never love you because I love now, with every bit of love there is in me, the man who has just left this house, who has gone to fight and perhaps will never come back.

COAST. Has he asked you to be his wife?

GEORGIANA. I love him all the same!

COAST. And I love you the same way you love him — ain't you a little sorry for me?

GEORGIANA. Yes —

COAST. That'll do to go on with —

GEORGIANA. [*Laughs hysterically.*] Oh — Sam, can't I make you understand?

COAST. No, nor make me give up. I'm coming to see you again to-morrow; when will you be in?

GEORGIANA. Not at all.

[*She moves about the room.*

COAST. What time in the afternoon?

GEORGIANA. I shall be out all afternoon.

COAST. I'll call at five.

GEORGIANA. Very well! You'll find Louise and mother.

COAST. *Coleman* thinks you'll have me!

GEORGIANA. He couldn't! Why should he?

COAST. He congratulated me, when he was here just now!

GEORGIANA. For what?

COAST. For you!

GEORGIANA. Oh! [*Laughing hysterically.*] That's what he meant by his happy marriage — [*Laughing and crying.*

COAST. If he mentioned marriage, that's what he meant.

GEORGIANA. But didn't you tell him he was wrong?

COAST. No.

GEORGIANA. But why not?

COAST. I wanted him to think it!

GEORGIANA. But it was wrong of you — it can never be true, and I don't want him to go away

believing it. [*Music of a military band is heard in the distance.*] Here they come! [*Going to the balcony, he follows.*] No, please don't come out with me! Sam — I don't want him to see me standing there with you. [SAM *starts towards* GEORGIANA.] Let me go out on the balcony *alone*, Sam! Please, alone!

[*He looks at her a moment and then deliberately goes past her out on to the balcony.*

MRS. CARLEY. [*Hurrying in from the Right.*] They're coming! I've told the children.

[*She goes out on balcony. The children run in.*

ALL THE CHILDREN. The soldiers are coming! Auntie, the soldiers are coming!

[*They rush out on the balcony.*

COAST. [*In the window, picking up* PHIL *in his arms.*] Come on, Georgy. What does it matter?

GEORGIANA. That's true, go on! What does it matter, it's good-by!

[COAST *goes on the balcony.* MRS. CARLEY, *on balcony, calls,* "Here comes DICK!" GEORGIANA *hesitates and then goes close to the window. She stands in a chair so as to see over the others' heads, hidden behind the curtain of the half-open window, and watches. The music is louder as they pass under the balcony; a flag is seen almost on level with the balcony floor. Those on the balcony wave and shout, and shouts are heard in the street.* GEORGIANA *stands still, wiping the tears from her eyes every moment with a tiny wad of a handkerchief, and as the music passes, growing less loud,*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

Eight months later. GEORGIANA'S *room, an octagonal room with dark panel walnut woodwork and panels of yellow brocade, with furniture to match. All in the simplest style of Louis XV. There is a fireplace on the Left, and doors Right and Left. Two windows at the back. At right of the Centre is a very large dressing table covered with massive silver toilet articles, a big mirror, candelabra, etc., and a silver-framed photograph of* DICK COLEMAN. *There is a low bench before the table, tables and chairs about the room, and a most comfortable, roomy sofa, on the Left, piled with embroidered pillows. It is after seven and the lamps are lit.* STEVEN

enters from Left and sits on the sofa. He is haggard, his clothes mussed, his linen rumpled and soiled. He is painfully nervous and agitated; he cannot keep still; as soon as he sits down he gets up; he goes from one place in the room to another, taking up a picture without looking at it, sitting down and getting up again. Twice he half whispers, half groans, "Good God!" *He takes out a pistol from his pocket, looks at it, and puts it away again as* LIZZIE *enters Right.*

LIZZIE. Miss Carley says she'll be in as soon as she can.

STEVEN. [*Rising and going to the dressing table.*] Is she dressing for the ball now?

LIZZIE. No, sir, she's wearing a tea gown for dinner; it'll be a grand sight, the ball, sir!

STEVEN. I suppose so.

LIZZIE. Pity *we* couldn't 'ave got the Grand Duke here, sir, to dinner.

STEVEN. [*Moving about.*] We couldn't afford to entertain a Russian prince, Lizzie, — don't tell your mistress, — but I've been speculating again and we're hard up.

LIZZIE. Oh, I am so sorry, sir — I know how to sympathize with you, though we did get our money back! Perhaps you'll get yours.

STEVEN. How about you and Moles?

[*Comes to* LIZZIE.

LIZZIE. Well, sir, last Tuesday we counted up, we're about two years off, or fourteen hundred dollars distance, so to speak. We've calculated then we could marry and settle down if we'd be satisfied with two rooms and no children.

[*There is a knock on door Left.*

Yes? [*Going to the door, opens it.*] Oh, come in, sir. [*Moves away.*] Mr. Carley is here.

COAST. [*Entering.*] Where's Miss Georgiana?

LIZZIE. She's dressing, sir. She'll be down in five or ten minutes.

[*Goes out Right.*

COAST. How are you?

[*The two men nod a surly greeting.*

STEVEN. I've been looking for you all afternoon!

COAST. Didn't you know I was coming here and going with your folks to the ball?

STEVEN. I forgot!

[*After a pause, both men look at each other.*

Well, Sam, I'm done! I'm done for good this time!

COAST. Sorry, but you can't blame me.

[*He sits in an arm-chair near the sofa.*

STEVEN. I do. You told me you were going into this last business, but you did'nt tell me you were going to get right out again.

COAST. 'Twasn't my business to tell you that — I didn't advise *you* to go in!

STEVEN. No, but you put me up to it all the same!

COAST. Not a bit! The only time I advised you was some months ago, when you'd just lost Louise's money, — then I put you on to something, so you shouldn't lose Georgiana's. Did you win?

STEVEN. Yes, and broke my word to Georgiana.

COAST. Well, that's her and your business, but it let me out! From that time on you were on your own hook.

STEVEN. You were always throwing out hints that you meant me to take.

COAST. Listen. [*Rises and goes to* STEVEN.] You can't prove that!

STEVEN. You know you led me into it, you know you did. You tempted me in the first place to break my word of honor to my sister. Whether you meant to or not, you did it, damn you — and you're a rich man, you've got millions, and can help me out! Will you?

COAST. [*Quietly.*] No.

[*Moves a little away toward the Left.*

STEVE. You're my wife's own cousin, and she's a pauper and through no fault of her own. Will you help me for her sake?

COAST. [*Still quietly.*] No.

STEVEN. You're in love with my sister, and she's not got a cent of her own to-night *through me.* Will you help me for her sake?

COAST. [*Still quietly.*] No!

STEVEN. [*Going to him.*] No?

COAST. No!

[*Strong.*

STEVEN. Then damn you for a dirty blackguard!

COAST. [*Laughs.*] That's pretty talk; I guess you got that from *me* too!

STEVEN. [*Doggedly.*] I'll do more than talk!

[*Turns away and goes up stage.*

COAST. What?

STEVEN. Wait and see.

COAST. Listen! if one thing happens, I'll help you.

STEVEN. [*Turning.*] You mean Georgiana?

COAST. Yes, if she'll marry me, I'll make up to you every damn cent of hers you've got rid of.

STEVEN. And if she won't?

COAST. I'll make up every penny of Louise's you've lost, if Georgiana'll marry me. Listen — [SAM *puts his arm around* STEVEN *and brings him down to the sofa and they sit.*] she loves you, you're the kind that always has influence with women; use yours for me, Steve, it'll be worth your while.

STEVEN. [*Half laughs.*] You want me to try and persuade her to marry you against her own desire even?

COAST. That's the figure.

STEVEN. When I know you're, in your way, just as dishonorable a man as I am, and hard and heartless, [STEVE *rises.*] I wouldn't risk my sister's happiness with you, if it would save me twice over. Even if she loved you, I'd say what I could against it.

COAST. [*Quick.*] She'll never know you broke your word to her if I help you.

STEVEN. Yes, she will, because I mean to tell her to-night.

COAST. All right!

STEVEN. That's what I've come for, to make a clean breast of everything.

COAST. You're a damned fool! [*He rises and moves away.*] However, each way plays more or less into my hands.

GEORGIANA. [*Outside of door Right.*] If you are telling secrets, look out — I'm coming!

COAST. Come on!

[GEORGIANA *comes in, dressed in graceful negligée tea gown.*

GEORGIANA. Good evening, Sam! Steve, you're not dressed yet?

STEVEN. I forgot about the ball.

GEORGIANA. I can tell you one person who hasn't, and that's mother!

COAST. [*Laughing.*] Is she going to be corking?

GEORGIANA. [*Sitting in the armchair by the sofa.*] If the Grand Duke were a bachelor and mother had designs upon him, she couldn't possibly take more pains! She's going to be beyond all words. She's got every jewel she owns and can borrow draped about her, till she looks like Tiffany's exhibit at the St. Louis Fair. And as for her hair, she's had Bella Shindle working on it all afternoon, till it's the Titianest Titian that ever flamed on human head!

COAST. Sounds great!

[*Sitting on the bench.* STEVEN *sits on the sofa.*

GEORGIANA. Wait! She's built her tiara up with a breastpin and an aigrette off my winter hat, and it was all I could do to keep her from wearing the three feathers in which she was presented to the Queen in A.D. '73.

[*They all laugh good-naturedly.*

COAST. Aunt Laura's a corker!

GEORGIANA. Well, no one will miss her! She'll get the Grand Duke's eye if no one else does! I tell her she'll go through the ballroom like a search-light!

COAST. Is she all dressed now?

GEORGIANA. Not yet. I'm judging by her dress rehearsal! I left her in a state of terrible indecision as to whether she should arch her eyebrows "just a little" with a burnt match!

[*All laugh again good-naturedly.*

COAST. Smart old girl!

GEORGIANA. She's all the happier for being silly, and she's a good soul and does her best! What's *your* news, Steve?

[*Turning to* STEVEN.

STEVEN. Sam, would you mind?

[*Motions to* COAST *to leave the room.*

COAST. Oh, no! [*Rises.*] See you later! I'll go and take a squint at auntie.

[*He goes out Right.*

GEORGIANA. Steve, you look troubled — what's gone wrong?

[*She goes to* STEVEN *on the sofa and sits beside him.*

STEVEN. *I* have!

GEORGIANA. How do you mean? You and Louise haven't quarrelled?

STEVEN. If it was only that!

GEORGIANA. What then?

STEVEN. I've gone wrong, I tell you, all wrong.

GEORGIANA. How? In what way, Steve?

STEVEN. Your money's lost, it's all lost.

[GEORGIANA *rises. A pause.*

GEORGIANA. How do you mean?

STEVEN. And that isn't the worst of it, either. I've broken my word to you! I know I've killed your faith in me. I've lost faith in myself.

GEORGIANA. [*Still standing, very strong.*] Steve!

STEVEN. I've speculated!

GEORGIANA. *No*, Steve!

STEVEN. [*Rises and goes to the mantel.*] Yes, I've been speculating since the very day I said I wouldn't. I won a lot at first, and of course I thought I'd get all back; and then, of course, what I did get back was my old cursed luck!

GEORGIANA. Oh, Steve! And I believed in you so thoroughly, I never had a doubt!

STEVEN. I know it! I know it! I'm rotten all through, Georgy. [*Bursting into tears.*] I'm not worth being forgiven — [*He falls on his knees, in a paroxysm of sobs and tears.*] I'm *rotten!* Oh — I'm rotten —

[*He sobs uncontrollably.*

[GEORGIANA *watches him a little while in silence. Then she goes to him and puts her hand on his shoulder.*

GEORGIANA. Steve!

STEVEN. [*Sobbing.*] Yes!

GEORGIANA. I forgive you!

STEVEN. No! No!

GEORGIANA. And I'll trust you again if I have a chance.

STEVEN. [*Looking up.*] Georgy, what do you mean?

[*Beginning to control his sobs.*

GEORGIANA. I mean, though it's been a pretty big blow, my faith in you isn't altogether gone yet.

STEVEN. Oh, I can't bear it! I can't bear it! But you don't mean it! No, you can't mean it!

How could you? Forgive me? Trust me again? No, no! You couldn't — it's all over! I've thrown away my own money first, then my wife's and her mother's — that ought to have been enough, — but I had to go and break my word of honor to you, and lose every penny of yours! There's no excuse for me, nor reason to forgive.

GEORGIANA. [*After a moment, very quietly, with her eyes filling.*] There's *love*, Steve!

STEVEN. Not for a man like me. I'm not worth it. [*He rises.*] Not deserving it! There's only one thing for such as me, and that is to end it all with a bullet.

GEORGIANA. Now you're talking wildly!

STEVEN. [*In a lowered voice.*] No, Georgy, I mean it! It's better for all of you to have me out of the way; I tried to do it to-day — only, *I was afraid!*

GEORGIANA. That would be worse than anything you have done yet. That I would never forgive — anything but that!

[*She goes to him.*

STEVEN. But the shame of my life now, the degradation, the *rot* of it!

[*A moment's pause.*

GEORGIANA. [*The idea comes to her.*] Steve, I told you I'd trust you again if I had the chance! Here is the first one, and I take it! Promise me you'll never again even think of taking your life.

STEVEN. What's the good of my promising?

GEORGIANA. If you tell me, I'll believe you.

[*A short pause.*

[STEVEN, *not looking at her, puts his hand in the pocket where the pistol is, then takes his hand away, still not looking at her.*

Look me straight in the face, Steve, and say, "I promise."

[*He hesitates only a moment, and then does so.*

STEVEN. I promise.

[*He turns a little away from her, takes the pistol from his pocket, and gives it to her.*

GEORGIANA. [*Bursting into tears.*] Oh, Steve!

[*She turns away and puts the pistol on the table between the windows.*

STEVEN. Forgive me, Georgy, forgive me! This promise I'll keep. Only forgive me for breaking your heart like this!

COAST. [*Entering Right.*] I've been sent up to bring you down to dinner.

[*He takes in the situation. A pause.*

GEORGIANA. Do you know what Steve has just told me?

STEVEN. [*Bitterly.*] Yes, he knows.

COAST. Just what?

GEORGIANA. Steve has gone on speculating, and my money's followed the rest.

COAST. Yes, I knew that.

GEORGIANA. Couldn't you have saved him?

COAST. I offered to once, but you refused.

GEORGIANA. And now?

[*Short pause.*

COAST. [*He goes to* GEORGIANA, *who is on the sofa.*] My offer is still open to the same tune.

STEVEN. No, Georgy, no!

GEORGIANA. For Steve's own sake, won't you do something for him? Get him some position so that he can take care of Louise. I'll look after myself.

COAST. I'll do all and more, *if you'll* marry me.

GEORGIANA. You know I can't marry you.

COAST. What does Steve say?

STEVEN. What Georgy says, I say.

COAST. How are you going to get out of this without me?

STEVEN. I don't know.

COAST. And there's something else. [*Steps towards* STEVEN.] Perhaps you don't know that unless some one does get you out of this, it won't be only a money smash up for Georgiana, but disgrace too!

GEORGIANA. That can't be true! I shall say my brother had control of my money to do what he liked with it.

COAST. But any lawyer would take up the case of criminal mismanagement for my aunt and cousin's affairs.

GEORGIANA. But *they* wouldn't allow it.

COAST. Well, what do you think?

STEVEN. Louise — never!

COAST. Leave it to me!

STEVEN. Ah! your true colors! You heard him, Georgy?

COAST. Well, let that pass. But you know that you've overdrawn at your bank, that you've overdrawn at your brokers, and that you can no more get out of the muddle you've got yourself into without one of the biggest public scandals there's been in the street for years!

GEORGIANA. But *you* can spare us that?

STEVEN. [*Very low.*] Good God!

[*He moves away.*

COAST. [*To* GEORGIANA.] That's what I can.

GEORGIANA. And you love me?

COAST. I certainly do!

GEORGIANA. Then you *will* spare us!

COAST. If you'll marry me.

STEVEN. No! [*Comes down to her.*] Georgy, you mustn't! [COAST *walks away.*] Don't you

see what a selfish brute Sam is? Of course it was *my* fault that I gambled, but he tempted me, he led me into it when he *knew* I *couldn't resist.* The very day and hour I gave you my promise, he gave me a tip and guaranteed I shouldn't lose!

GEORGIANA. Sam! Oh!

[*She turns to the bench before her dressing table and sinks upon it.*

COAST. [*Speaks to her across the table.*] It's true! And I led him to speculate more, I tricked him first with winning and then let him go! I knew he'd soon do for himself alone, and he did! Yes — I ruined him purposely and you through him, so as to get you to be my wife. I did it purposely and I'd do it again! Of course I meant all along to make it up in the end when I'd got you.

GEORGIANA. And did you really think you *could* get me that way?

COAST. Why, you've got to marry me. You needn't be afraid of what I won't do for you. I love you, you know that. Everything — I've told you that before. You shall have *everything* on God's earth you want, and Louise and her mother shall live in style as they always have, and Steve have his own money back, with a brother-in-law to help him take care of it! And what's the other side of the picture? Nothing for you or Louise or anybody — and disgrace for Steve into the bargain. Why, you've *got* to *marry* me! [GEORGIANA. *rises*, COAST *follows her.*] Don't you see? Anyway [*Smiling.*] it was only a trick to make you, because, Georgy, I love you so! [*A pause; she stands looking at him.*] Well?

GEORGIANA. I'm trying to realize — to understand it all.

[MOLES *enters Left.*

MOLES. Please, miss, Mrs. Carley says your soup is all cold and they're on with the fish.

GEORGIANA. Tell Mrs. Carley not to wait for Mr. Carley and me, we're not coming down; but Mr. Coast will join them in a moment.

[COAST *looks up surprised.*

MOLES. Yes, miss.

[*He goes out. A moment's pause.*

COAST. What do you mean by that?

[*Another pause.*

GEORGIANA. [*Slowly.*] Not to save myself, not even to save my brother, and from even worse than we have to face, would I marry you.

COAST. Don't say that, Georgy!

GEORGY. Why, every word you've said, and everything you've done to make me love you, makes me instead — yes — and for what you've done with Steve [*Looks at* STEVE.], *I do hate* you.

[*Goes to the sofa,* COAST *follows.*

COAST. I only said it because I love you, Georgiana.

GEORGIANA. Oh, Sam Coast, you don't know what love is! Love doesn't make beasts of men, it makes men of beasts. It doesn't take all for itself — it sacrifices all for another. Love isn't an enemy that lays traps and makes ambushes, — love is a friend whose heart is a divine magnet! Real love makes an angel of a woman and a hero of a man, but love such as you have — oh, the happiness in this world that's been lost through it!

COAST. You don't know me!

GEORGIANA. I didn't, but I do! You've dragged down my brother, sacrificed him and my belief in him, almost, for your own selfish end, tried to trap me into marrying you when you know I didn't love you.

COAST. But you would —

GEORGIANA. Once perhaps, though I can't imagine it! But not now! No! I'd starve and suffer and die now before I could ever love you.

[*A pause;* COAST *goes to the table and stands half shamefaced a moment, then he pulls himself up and turns.*

COAST. Well, face the music for a while, and then see!

GEORGIANA. They're waiting for you at dinner; please join them and tell them what you like.

COAST. I'll tell them nothing. I'll let you and Steve think things over a little.

STEVEN. [*Rises, and goes to meet* COAST.] You will have something to settle with me outside of money matters!

COAST. [*With a jeer.*] Please yourself.

[*He goes out.*

GEORGIANA. [*To* STEVEN.] I believe I can influence Louise to do nothing for the sake of the children, and she loves you in her way.

STEVEN. But the bank?

[*He sits on sofa beside her.*

GEORGIANA. Oh, we can take care of the bank; after all, we've friends, we've jewels, we've this house.

STEVEN. That's true, and the brokers?

GEORGIANA. Who are they?

STEVEN. Caldwell and Hovery.

GEORGIANA. Mr. Caldwell will be at the ball to-night?

STEVEN. Probably.

GEORGIANA. I'll see him. We've always been good friends, — and so were his father and your father. He won't let his firm make a scandal if

he can help it, especially as they can gain nothing and we should lose so much! Steve, we'll get out of this yet, with your name all right!

BELLA. [*Entering Right.*] May I come in?

GEORGAINA. Yes, Bella.

BELLA. Oh, good evening, Mr. Carley, it's a pleasant evening!

STEVEN. Good evening, Miss Shindle.

BELLA. What I come to ask is if I shall do you low, and Mrs. Wishings around the corner afterwards?

GEORGIANA. I think I'd rather you went to Mrs. Wishings first if you don't mind.

BELLA. Oh, it's all the same to me! Mrs. Wishings ain't really in the smart set and they say her husband ain't so rich, and she's horrid to her servants — don't give them cake. I don't care if I lost her head to do! I'm like that, as you know,

particular when I'm particular, but — well — just supercilious and negligée when it don't count! Good gracious! [*Laughing.*] Oh, here's a letter for you I brought up for Lizzie. It's from the Phillypeenys and has a special delivery on. [GEORGIANA *takes letter and opens it and reads it.*] That's how it come at this hour. Some folks do have luck, as the saying is! I've got to wait till to-morrow morning for mine if I get one, and if there's a Phillypeeny post and I don't get one, well, I pity the ladies' hair I dress to-morrow, that's all! [*To* STEVEN.] Mr. Carley, you've got lovely soft hair, haven't you? I know you have a lovely disposition, I can tell it from your hair. Yes, indeed, they always go together, it's a certain sign! Now Mrs. Wishings' hair is just like a horse's tail! what there is of it. I often feel like asking her which she'd rather I done it, on or off! [*Laughs*

heartily.] I must have my little joke, but nobody minds me — good-by.

STEVEN. Good-by.

[BELLA *goes out Left.*

GEORGIANA. [*Looking up, bursting with happiness and reading as she speaks.*] Oh, Steve! Steve! Such *good* news! I can hardly wait to tell you, but just let me finish it.

STEVEN. Finish anything that means good news, Georgy, and then for heaven's sake tell me what it is.

GEORGIANA. [*Closing the letter.*] It's finished!

[*She looks up radiant and forgetful of him for a moment.*

STEVEN. Well!

[*Rises and goes to* GEORGIANA

GEORGIANA. [*Softly.*] *Dick* loves me!

STEVEN. Dick Coleman?

GEORGIANA. He loves me, he's always loved me!

STEVEN. But why —? I don't understand —

GEORGIANA. No, I didn't know it. I thought — there were reasons why I thought he didn't love me. But I understand now. Listen; I'll read you a part of his letter — *a part of it!* Oh, this makes up for everything, Steve. [*She reads.*] "My dear — [*She stops and improvises the next three words.*] my dear Georgy: [*She looks up slyly to see if Steven noticed the change; he didn't.*] Each steamer brings me letters from home, but never a word of your engagement to Coast, never a word of your marriage. Is that broken off —" How do you suppose he got the impression I was going to marry Sam?

STEVEN. Why everybody has seen, who cared to look, that Sam was dead in love with you.

GEORGIANA. Yes, but — well — never mind, listen — "Well, however it is, we're starting off to-morrow out of reach of letters and everything else, except an ugly band of natives that we came here to do for. The chances are pretty big against many of us getting back, and anyway I'm going to take this chance to tell you that I love you better than anything and everything and everybody in the world. And in case I never come back, somehow or other, I don't know why, I want you to know it. I was a little late in finding it out, — all of a sudden I knew you were the only woman for me, and that the only thing I seemed to want in the world was you for *a wife*. And there was Coast ahead of me! I don't know if it would have made any difference if you loved Coast and not me, perhaps you never would have cared for me, but I'd have done my best, for, Georgy — I love you —

[*She reads ahead to herself, murmuring so he cannot understand.*] "I don't know why I must tell you all this, but I must" — [*She reads ahead again in silence, skipping the passages which are too loving and too precious to read aloud.*] I think that's all — [*She looks up and smiles, and adds softly.*] that I care to read aloud! Oh, Steve!

[*She puts her arms around his neck and hugs him.*

STEVEN. I'm so glad, old girl, so glad!

[*Tightening his arm about her.*

GEORGIANA. Steve, I'm so happy! I don't want to seem selfish, and really I'm not forgetting you, but I can't help it. I'm *so* happy.

[STEVEN *kisses her. A short pause.*

GEORGIANA. [*Softly, thoughtfully.*] Can one cable to the Philippines?

STEVEN. Yes!

[*Smiling and again giving her a little squeeze.*

GEORGIANA. [*Going to the sofa.*] So far as I'm concerned, my money now doesn't count a rap. Dick has plenty and doesn't want mine. So now it's only Louise and mother you must think of, and you can take care of them well, you know you can, if they'll only accept the different conditions. And Dick and I'll help —

STEVEN. [*Interrupting.*] I hate to say it, Georgiana, but suppose —

[*Very serious.*

GEORGIANA. What?

STEVEN. Well, you know why Dick wrote that letter, — because he was going into dangerous fighting.

GEORGIANA. Oh, he will come back, he *must* come back! So few of our men have been lost in the Philippines, Dick can't be one of the few. After all, life nowadays isn't so tragic as that.

STEVEN. Yes, of course Dick'll come back, Georgy [*Short pause.*], but won't he despise me?

GEORGIANA. No, you're *my* brother. And oh, Steven, forgive me, but I'm so *happy*. [*Hugging the pillows on the sofa and burying her face in them.*] Don't let me be silly — don't let me forget I'm an old maid, — and there's no fool like an old fool! I mustn't forget there's probably an orange or two among the blossoms for my hair!

[MRS. CARLEY *and* LOUISE *come into the room from the Right without speaking. They look from* GEORGIANA *to* STEVEN. *They are under the strain of violent emotion almost too much for words. Their appearance is tragic.*] *There is a pause.*

STEVEN. Sam has told you?

LOUISE. It isn't *true* what he says?

MRS. CARLEY. [*Bursting out, as the strain breaks.*] That everything's gone? *Everything!*

[MRS. CARLEY *comes to* STEVEN.

STEVEN. Yes, it's *true!* —

[*He moves up.*

MRS. CARLEY. *We haven't a cent?* — not a *penny!* for car fare! for theatre tickets! nothing for our wash bills, or to go away with in the summer!

LOUISE. Georgiana's money gone too — now Steve?

MRS. CARLEY. As well as *Louise's* and *mine?*

GEORGIANA. Yes, mine's gone too now, but I'm going to take it just as sensibly as Louise did before me.

MRS. CARLEY. She had yours to fall back on.

GEORGIANA. And I'm going to take myself off

your hands, and Steve is perfectly capable of getting some dignified position and taking care of you and Louise.

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, I can imagine what that means! A flat with rooms like a string of buttons, mantelpiece beds and divans! and all your friends trying to get into the bathroom when they are looking for the hall door to get out!

[COAST *comes in from the Right. They all look at* SAM.

GEORGIANA. Do you think Sam has a place here in what we may say now?

LOUISE. Why not? He's my cousin.

MRS. CARLEY. Yes. And the only one of us now anyway who has a cent.

LOUISE. I don't think we can expect much help from Sam as to money.

COAST. That shows you don't know me.

LOUISE. [*Going to* COAST.] You'll help us?

COAST. I've offered to make up every cent Steve's lost; ask Georgiana.

GEORGIANA. Yes, Sam offered to make a "trade" with me —

MRS. CARLEY. How?

[*Looks at* GEORGIANA.

GEORGIANA. To make up Steve's losses if I'd marry him.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Quickly to* COAST.] Sam! It's too good to be true.

COAST. So Georgiana thinks.

LOUISE. [*Angrily.*] You won't do it?

GEORGIANA. No, I don't love your cousin.

MRS. CARLEY. Don't love him! What do you owe us? Louise loved Steve and what good did it do her? You've got the chance to make up for your brother!

STEVEN. That's not Georgiana's *duty*, — to make up for me.

MRS. CARLEY. You can't do it yourself, and you don't want your wife to starve, do you.

GEORGIANA. Louise *won't* starve.

LOUISE. [*To* GEORGIANA.] You could save us and you won't!

GEORGIANA. I don't love Sam.

MRS. CARLEY. Don't "love"? Did Molly Packer from Toledo love the Duke of Birmingham? and isn't she happy now?

GEORGIANA. I don't know, I have my doubts.

MRS. CARLEY. Doubts! Oh, *doubts!*

GEORGIANA. That's not the point, mother. I'm not going to marry Sam.

MRS. CARLEY. Oh, very well, then, have your way.

GEORGIANA. I will, mother.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Going to the sofa.*] Don't consider my way at all.

GEORGIANA. I won't, mother, since you ask me not to.

MRS. CARLEY. But I'll tell you this, Georgiana, you're just as bad as Steve! We must shake off both of you. Louise must get a divorce and marry again. Look what other widows have done before her.

[*Louise goes to her mother and takes her hand.*

GEORGIANA. Mother! Louise!

LOUISE. Well, why not?

MRS. CARLEY. Certainly!

GEORGIANA. [*Goes to them.*] *No!* Listen! You must stand by Steve, both of you. You ought to do it out of affection, for, after all, whatever you've got of friends and position and the things you value he gave you! But never mind that!

You ought to stand by him out of loyalty, — but never mind that! You've *got* to stand by him because if you ruin him you'll ruin yourselves. You and mother could never hold up your heads again in our world — in the world you love — if you left Steve. After all, though our world may be careless sometimes of what it does itself, it is very particular about what those people do who are *its guests!* Of course, Louise, it does come hardest on you, for yourself and for the children — but still you've got to stand by Steve.

MRS. CARLEY. Sam!

[*Going to* SAM *for help.*

LOUISE. Oh, I suppose I'll forgive him, I always do, but I don't know about forgiving you.

GEORGIANA. *Me?*

LOUISE. If you don't marry Sam! You can make everything all right, and Sam loves you —

you can make mother happy and me happy and Steve happy. . . .

STEVEN. [*Interrupting.*] No, leave me out!

[*He goes up behind the sofa.*

LOUISE. Our life would go on just the same, — Steve will make no more mistakes. I think you're heartless to refuse!

GEORGIANA. But, Louise, you ask me to give up entirely my own happiness.

LOUISE. Not at all! There's no one else in love with you but Sam, and this isn't your first year out, you know.

MRS. CARLEY. And anyway it would be *five* happy against *one* unhappy, there's no arguing about that.

COAST. [*To* LOUISE.] You and your mother both think she ought to accept me, don't you?

LOUISE. Certainly.

COAST. [*To* GEORGIANA.] I told you.

GEORGIANA. Yes, Sam, you win! — but Louise! I love some one else.

LOUISE. Dick Coleman?

GEORGIANA. Yes, and I'm going to marry him.

COAST. [*Turning quickly.*] Has he asked you?

GEORGIANA. Yes! To-day!

[*Showing her letter.* MRS. CARLEY *sits on the sofa.*

COAST. [*Angry, to* LOUISE.] Then you bring suit against Steve and I'll back you up, — I'll bet you I'll get your case!

LOUISE. But Steve hasn't any money.

COAST. No, but you can show him up! You can blackguard his name for him! You can disgrace him in the papers!

LOUISE. But I don't want to do that! It would only make things worse.

GEORGIANA. Good, Louise!

COAST. I'll bet the bank and Steve's brokers won't be so soft-hearted.

GEORGIANA. There's this house for the bank.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Crying.*] *This house!* I shall die!

[GEORGIANA *goes to her.*

GEORGIANA. Oh, no, you won't; you'll live very happily in a nice little flat, with two servants and a polite elevator boy in buttons.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Pitifully.*] Louise!

GEORGIANA. And Mr. Caldwell I am going to see at the ball to-night. I believe he will help us if he can.

LOUISE. You're going to the ball? In spite of everything?

GEORGIANA. Yes, we must. Let's have as little

talk about the whole thing as possible. Steve's had bad luck! The people mustn't think there's anything we're ashamed of. There isn't anything.

COAST. Oh, isn't there?

GEORGIANA. No.

[LOUISE *gets the smelling salts from the table for* MRS. CARLEY.

MRS. CARLEY. It's true; so long as we've lost everything else, I don't see why she should lose the ball too!

[*Using the smelling salts.*

LOUISE. And I suppose we really ought to be seen there, or lots of people will *never* believe we were asked.

COAST. Well, I guess this is where I get out. I'll strike one of those musical comedies! I think ragtime will be good enough for me to-night,

instead of a neck and arm circus. You won't want me for escort after all this?

LOUISE. You can please yourself, Sam.

COAST. Not exactly; I guess this is the day I try sour grapes. [*Goes to door Left, — he turns.*] When's Coleman coming back, Georgiana?

GEORGIANA. I don't know.

COAST. Oh! [*Goes to* STEVEN *at mantel.*] Steve — listen — how long are they holding that rotten stock of yours for you?

STEVEN. [*Laughs.*] Ha! till to-morrow noon.

COAST. Well, cheer up, I'll send her up ten points for you by eleven. [*Slaps him on the back.*] See you all later, maybe, if my show's dull.

[*And with a side glance at* GEORGIANA *he goes out Left.*

MRS. CARLEY. [*Rises.*] I only wish to heaven Sam Coast wanted to marry *me!*

LOUISE. Mother! Come, let's finish dressing.

MRS. CARLEY. I don't know whether to go to the ball or stay home and have a good cry.

GEORGIANA. Do whichever gives you the most pleasure, mother.

[LIZZIE *enters Right and stands behind the dressing table.*

MRS. CARLEY. What? [*Looking at herself in the glass.*] It's all very well for them to give us women a new front, I wish they'd give us new backs too.

[*She goes out Right.*

LIZZIE. You must start dressing, miss — Miss Shindle will be back.

GEORGIANA. [*Absent-mindedly.*] Yes, yes, Lizzie.

[LIZZIE *goes out.*]

Louise, I'm so glad you will stand by Steve; and try and be glad a little for me.

[*Placing her arm about* LOUISE.

LOUISE. Yes, I don't blame you, Georgy, so long as Dick's proposed. I'd do just as you've done, and I will be glad for you by to-morrow, — I am *glad now.*

[*Kisses her impulsively.*

GEORGIANA. Thank you, Louise, dear.

[*She goes out Right.*

STEVEN. Louise!

LOUISE. [*Comes to* STEVE.] Steve. [LOUISE *touches* STEVE *on the arm.*] I don't want to be horrid, but do you think you will be able to get anything decent to do?

STEVEN. I'm sure I will.

LOUISE. But will we have enough money to hold our own?

STEVEN. I'll do my best. Louise, I appreciate your not making more of a row!

[*With his arm around her.*

LOUISE. Oh, Steve, I know it's just as hard for you — and I do love you and I want to be nice about it, but — [*She cries.* STEVEN *kisses her again, in his arms.*] I mustn't give way like this. I'll be a sight at the ball. Don't let me cry, dear.

STEVEN. All right. Come on upstairs now, and make yourself beautiful.

[*They go toward the door Right.*

BELLA. [*Reëntering Left.*] Good evening again, is Miss Georgiana ready for me?

LOUISE. She must be, — is my hair all right?

BELLA. Oh, yes, that's one thing about my hair dressing, though I do say it as shouldn't, it *has* a lasting quality.

[LOUISE *goes out Right.*

GEORGIANA. [*Calls from inside.*] Is that you Bella?

BELLA. Yes, ma'am.

GEORGIANA. I'll be there in a minute — be quick, Lizzie.

BELLA. [*Lower voice.*] Mr. Carley, have you seen the evening papers?

STEVEN. No!

BELLA. I just bought one and it's got an article about the 91st regiment.

STEVEN. What about it?

[*Looks to see if door is closed.*

BELLA. [*Same voice.*] They say it may 'a' been wiped out of existence: it's three weeks now since news of it was due, and the paper's afraid they've met with an ambyscade or something like that.

STEVEN. Oh, when the newspapers are hard up for news they get up something about the Philippines! It's the modern sea serpent. When there's absoutely nothing else to print — no girl

suicide in Brooklyn, or cyclone in Kansas, or joke on Chicago, then they give the Philippines a paragraph or an insurrection. Don't you worry, Miss Shindle.

[*He sits in the arm-chair near the sofa.*

BELLA. But it says the island they went against was the heathenest of the lot, and that there's no good reason why if they'd hadn't no fight with the natives, we shouldn't 'a' had news from them.

STEVEN. The whole question of news in a case like this is too uncertain to make so much alarm about. The men's idea is not to send picture postal cards of daily movements home to America, but to lick the natives into shape!

BELLA. I'm sure you do comfort me. Don't know as Miss Georgiana told you, but my young man's out there, with Mr. — Lieutenant Coleman.

STEVEN. Well, don't worry. You just make up your mind the papers are short of news to-night.

BELLA. Goodness, they won't be to-morrow with all they're going to print about this ball! Say, I've a friend who's sister's a literary lady and writes for the Sunday papers in Buffalo. She's got an article in my line, called the "Heads of the Smart Set which was Set at the Grand Duke." Ain't that a cute name for an article? And it don't mean their heads either; it means their coffyures, as she says — she speaks French. She was born and raised in Niagara Falls, near to Canada, where the language comes natural,—over the water, as it were!

STEVEN. [*Going to her.*] I wouldn't mention this newspaper report to Miss Carley — it would only needlessly alarm her, perhaps, and spoil her evening.

BELLA. Oh, I wouldn't for worlds.

[*She moves to the dressing table as* GEORGIANA *comes in.*

GEORGIANA. Here I am! Oh, my dear Steve! You'll be late. You're not dressed yet.

STEVEN. All right. I'm going now — I was entertaining Miss Shindle till you were ready.

[*With a bow to* MISS SHINDLE, STEVEN *goes out Right.*

BELLA. [*Taking her bottles, etc., from a little bag which she carries.*] He *is* a *perfect* gentleman!

GEORGIANA. [*Sitting before the dressing table.*] Now come along, Bella! I only want you to brush my hair; I've had a trying evening here, and I've a splitting headache. See if you can take it away and make me look as if I'd never had one.

BELLA. [*Tying apron about* GEORGIANA'S *neck.*] I'll do my best; but I can tell you most of the

ladies I know'd be willing to have a headache every blessed minute of their lives if they could look as you do now!

GEORGIANA. Oh, what blarney, Bella! I don't know, somehow I want to be beautiful to-night.

BELLA. For the Dook?

[*Beginning to brush her hair.*

GEORGIANA. No!

BELLA. For him?

[*Pointing at* COLEMAN'S *photograph with her hair-brush.*

GEORGIANA. Yes. [*Drawing the picture toward her.*] It was a dear letter I had from him to-night, Bella! I hope you'll have as nice a one from Mr. Gootch to-morrow morning.

BELLA. Well, if I don't —

[*Shutting her teeth, she unconsciously pulls* GEORGIANA'S *hair.*

GEORGIANA. Oh, oh!

BELLA. Oh, I beg your pardon!

GEORGIANA. Don't take it out on me, wait till Mr. Gootch gets back!

BELLA. [*Combing.*] I don't know as you're the jealous kind. Judging from your hair you ain't. It usually goes with blonde or red, or else crimpy, and what I dislike about red hair is the freckles — you can almost count on 'em! You've got sort of trusting hair. But besides, Mr. Coleman wasn't a floor walker in a shop with over a hundred lady clerks — I think that's apt to make a gentleman flightier; and he being *bald*, has me to a disadvantage, so to speak. I can't judge by my customary signs.

GEORGIANA. [*Looking at* COLEMAN'S *photograph.*] Bella, I should say Lieutenant Coleman has splendid, straight, honest hair, shouldn't you?

BELLA. I can't say as I've ever really had any experience of his hair, ma'am.

GEORGIANA. But do you think him an awfully handsome man, Bella, or am I prejudiced?

BELLA. No, indeed, I never seen a handsomer gentleman, not even in the pictures of gentlemen's clothes in tailor store windows. [*Puts comb down, and takes brush and brushes again.*] But what continues to make me nervous about Mr. Gootch is that he's right there among all those black creatures, whose manners is very free, I'm told, and whose style of dressing is peculiar, the least you say! Mr. Gootch always did favor dark-complexioned people, and if that letter don't come to-morrow —

[*Getting excited, she again pulls* GEORGIANA'S *hair.*

GEORGIANA. Ouch! [*Laughing, holds up her*

hand and catches her hair to ward off another pull.] Be careful!

BELLA. Excuse me! in my art, there's no use talking, you oughtn't let your mind wander from the subject in hand — does your head feel better?

GEORGIANA. I don't know, Bella, if it does or not! Your treatment is very heroic.

BELLA. [*Spraying her hair.*] You don't feel worried about something happening to them way out there, do you, Miss Georgiana?

GEORGIANA. I daren't think of it. Oh, Bella, I've had lots of trouble to-day, and I've a serious time ahead of me — but all the same I am such a happy woman. [*Turning to look at* BELLA, *she disarranges her hair, much to* BELLA'S *disapproval.*] Do you love Mr. Gootch tremendously, Bella?

BELLA. Why, love isn't the word! my feeling for Mr. Gootch is a positive worship. When I

get to thinking of him in the underground I always go by my station, sometimes two.

GEORGIANA. Be grateful for your love, Bella; it's a wonderful thing.

BELLA. [*Finishing the dressing of the hair.*] You know I've just done Mrs. Wishings, she puts too much on!

GEORGIANA. Does she rouge?

BELLA. No, hair. I don't mind a switch or two for foundation, and a couple of puffs for ornament, with a tight curl or two for style, — especially if you've got one of those new undilated fronts, but I think that's all you can expect to have any hair dresser make look as if it growed there. There! How's that?

[*Puts hairpin in* GEORGIANA'S *hair.*

GEORGIANA. [*Holding up* DICK'S *photograph.*] How's that, Dick — is it all right?

BELLA. [*Delighted.*] Ain't that a cute idea?

GEORGIANA. We both trust you, Bella, to make me all right.

BELLA. What ornaments?

[*Taking off the apron, she walks around to Right of the table.*

GEORGIANA. Would you wear any?

BELLA. Oh, yes, for such an occasion! Of course, for maidens only feathers is correct; for wives and widows, tiaras and feathers.

[*Putting away her things.* MRS. CARLEY *enters in a flurry of excitement, superbly dressed, and too youthfully.*

MRS. CARLEY. Here I am; I've hurried so I don't feel half dressed.

GEORGIANA. [*Smiling.*] That's almost the way you *look*, mother.

MRS. CARLEY. Well, I always did have shoul-

ders, and I don't intend to hide them under a bushel; but what do you think of the dress, is it a success?

GEORGIANA. From your point of view — perfect!

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, but what's the difference about your point of view about it and mine?

GEORGIANA. Well, I should think about thirty years, darling!

MRS. CARLEY. Oh, Georgiana, you really are unkind. When I don't know how on earth it's ever going to be paid for now, I think you might be serious, and let me feel anyway its a success.

GEORGIANA. Mother dear, it's a triumph. Really, I never saw you look better!

MRS. CARLEY. Really! and how is my hair?

GEORGIANA. Redder!

BELLA. Oh, Miss Georgiana, it isn't too red a bit.

GEORGIANA. It's very fine, Bella, but I think I'd take off a little. You don't want Mrs. Carley to rival Mrs. Wishings and look as if she'd cornered the hair market.

BELLA. She's just teasing you.

[GEORGIANA *has risen.*

MRS. CARLEY. You are lovely, Georgiana.

GEORGIANA. That's because my thoughts are lovely.

MRS. CARLEY. I'm awfully proud of you, dear, and wish you were my own daughter.

GEORGIANA. Thank you, mother.

MRS. CARLEY. The Grand Duke will surely notice you. Aren't you going to put something in your hair?

BELLA. [*Handing it to* GEORGIANA.] A rose with glass dewdrops.

[*Newsboy's voice heard in the street — calling, "Extra — Extra — Terrible" — the rest is indistinct.*

GEORGIANA. What's that?

MRS. CARLEY. A newsboy with an extra.

[*Man's voice outside, "Extra — Extra — Terrible" — the rest is still indistinct.* LOUISE *enters, beautifully dressed.*

BELLA. Oh!

GEORGIANA. Lovely, Louise!

LOUISE. I've got a splitting headache. [*Man's voice outside, "Extra — Extra."*] What can the extra be? [*Enter* STEVEN.] Steve, do you know what the extra is?

STEVEN. Oh, they're never anything you know.

[*In distance are heard several voices at once at different distances, all calling,* "Extra—Extra—Terrible"—*etc.*

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, they're always so disappointing, generally a railway accident out west! or a bomb thrown in Europe. Are you ready, Georgiana?

[*The "Extras" are louder.*

STEVEN. Yes, if we're going we ought to go.

["Extra—Extra," *called underneath the window.*

GEORGIANA. Listen, what did he say?

[*Voice shouts outside,* "Terrible fight in the Philippines; an entire regiment wiped out!"

BELLA. [*Frightened.*] I heard "Philippines."

[*Goes to the window.*

GEORGIANA. And a terrible fight! Some one must get the paper!

STEVEN. We haven't time now, Georgy.

MRS. CARLEY. Yes, we must be there before the Grand Duke arrives.

[*Outside*, "Extra — Extra!"

GEORGIANA. I must see that paper, Steve.

MRS. CARLEY. Georgiana, I think you are too thoughtless.

[*Outside*, "Entire regiment wiped out!"

GEORGIANA. Steve, do you hear that! Will you get the paper or shall I call to the man?

STEVEN. I'll get it. [*Goes to a window and opens it, pulling aside the curtain. He calls down to the boy in the street.*] Here! Hi! Extra!

[*Voice outside*, "Here you are, boss!"

STEVEN. Ring the bell.

[*He comes back into the room. One* "Extra" *is heard louder than before, and then the cries gradually die away.*

MRS. CARLEY. The carriage has already been here nearly an hour.

GEORGIANA. If it should be Dick's fight, if it should be Dick's regiment!

LOUISE. Make up your mind, mother, to be a little late. We can't go till we see the paper.

GEORGIANA. [*At the door Right.*] Lizzie! Where is she? Didn't he go to the door with the paper, Steve?

BELLA. I'll see, miss.

[*She goes out Right.*

STEVEN. Yes. I saw him. But, Georgy, it won't be Dick's regiment.

MRS. CARLEY. [*By the sofa.*] Louise, I'll tell you what we'll do, let's go down and be getting on our wraps.

LOUISE. No, mother, wait.

GEORGIANA. No, Louise, go down, please, with mother. I'd rather.

MRS. CARLEY. [*Going out Left.*] Yes, come along.

[LOUISE *looks at* GEORGIANA, *who nods her head "Yes" to go.*

LOUISE. I'll come back.

[*She follows* MRS. CARLEY *out.* LIZZIE *enters Right with the paper.* GEORGIANA *takes the paper from* LIZZIE, *who immediately goes out Right.*

STEVEN. Shall I look?

GEORGIANA. [*Standing by the sofa.*] No, I will. Here it is — "Battle with Ladrones. The 91st Regiment of New York, which went out under Captain H. S. Miller to subdue the bandits in the Island of Orla, met an ambuscade of the Ladrones and were annihilated almost to a man."

[*She looks up dazed, not able at once to realize what it means. Rereads, skipping some lines.*] "Captain H. S. Miller who went out under — to subdue the bandits in the — met an ambuscade of the Ladrones and was annihilated almost to a man." Steve! his regiment, — do you think it's true? Do you think it can be true?

STEVEN. [*Beside her.*] No, let me read it.

GEORGIANA. [*She sinks down on the end of the sofa.*] No, I will! [*She reads on.*] "News was brought by private — private — [*Her eyes hurrying on.*] the sole survivors. Privates —" [*Her eyes run along the printed lines again.*] Steve, I can't see his name. Isn't it there? Can't *you* see it?

STEVEN. [*Looking.*] No.

GEORGIANA. [*Almost whispers.*] It means —?

STEVEN. [*Striving to hide his own emotion and*

to encourage her.] The news is too meagre to be true.

MRS. CARLEY. [*In hall Left.*] Georgiana! We must go.

GEORGIANA. [*Starts. To* STEVEN.] *Don't* let mother come in, please.

LOUISE. [*Just outside the door.*] Georgiana, we must go.

GEORGIANA. [*To* STEVEN.] Say I'm coming.

STEVEN. I can't leave you alone. [*Going to the door.*] Georgy's coming.

LOUISE. [*Outside.*] Good! Hurry!

STEVEN. [*Coming back to her.*] But I can't leave you.

GEORGIANA. You must. And anyway I want you to. I want to be alone.

[STEVEN *hesitates. He comes and takes her hand and is about to kiss her, but something*

keeps him back; he presses her hand and she gives a grateful look. She crosses to the dressing table and sits before it, dazed. Slowly she takes the flowers from her hair, the pearls from her neck. The front door slams, she lifts her head, and leaning her arm toward DICK'S *picture, draws it toward her, gazing at it. Then, crying,* " Dick, Dick," *she bursts into tears and drops her head upon her arms outstretched on the table as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT IV

Seven weeks later. The drawing-room as in Act II. GEORGIANA, *in a clinging black lace dress, is at the piano, playing "Traumerei." The sunshine pours in through the windows.* MOLES *comes in apologetically from the Left.*

MOLES. Mr. Coast wants to know if you will see him, miss.

GEORGIANA. [*Who continues playing.*] Very well, Moles.

MOLES. Shall I show him up?

[GEORGIANA *nods her head.* MOLES *goes out.* GEORGIANA *continues playing. In a few seconds* MOLES *reënters with* COAST.

COAST. Good morning, Georgiana.

[GEORGIANA, *half smiling, bows very impersonally, and continues playing till she finishes the music.* COAST *leans against the piano, facing her, and watches her and waits.*

GEORGIANA. [*When she has finished.*] How long is it since you and I have been friends?

COAST. It's five weeks and a couple of days — but it wasn't my fault.

GEORGIANA. Wasn't it? Well? What is it? Why do you want to see me?

COAST. Same reason as ever!

GEORGIANA. No, — you wouldn't ask me that now!

COAST. Yes, I would!

GEORGIANA. No, Sam! Love isn't a game with all women, if you lose with one hand, to try another. Do you mean you think because Dick

is dead, it would be any more possible for me to care for you? I don't respect you, Sam, and I don't like you, — and that's putting it very politely, — for many reasons; but one's enough — *Steve!*

[COAST *looks away.*

COAST. [*After a second's pause.*] I've let you go on because I know I deserve all I get; and I've caught on to the fact that you won't ever care about me the way I want. Well, it's funny, it don't seem to make much difference in my feelings for you all the same! [*Half laughs.*] I ain't exactly ashamed of what I've done, but I'm sort of *sorry* — for *you.*

GEORGIANA. [*Rising.*] I don't want your sympathy, Sam.

[*She comes away from the piano and he follows her.*

COAST. Well, you've got to get it, anyway! That you can't help, and if you can help loving me, you can't help my loving you! Anyway, I don't want you to have to get out o' this house.

GEORGIANA. That is all settled now; we can't afford to live here, of course.

COAST. Yes, you can.

GEORGIANA. No, no — Steve's salary —

COAST. Steve's leaving that job; he don't need that money any longer.

[*He looks at her, she looks in his face — a short pause; then —*

GEORGIANA. You don't mean you've given Steve —

COAST. Don't worry, I'm giving away nothing. Steve's got a new job.

GEORGIANA. What?

COAST. I'm going home — leastways so far's

Denver — and Steve's going to look after my interests here.

GEORGIANA. But —

COAST. [*Interrupting her.*] Oh, don't worry — he can't act without my advice — and that's just the kind of a man I want! I don't want none of these here fellers who's got judgment o' their own! Steve's knows he's a fool in business, and he'll obey me implicitly

GEORGIANA. [*Sitting by the table Left.*] And Steve is willing to accept from *you* —

COAST. [*Interrupting.*] Oh, I guess he considers I *owe* him that much anyway.

GEORGIANA. You couldn't repay what you owe Steve.

COAST. That's how *you* look at it! Then there's Coleman's money.

GEORGIANA. Don't speak about that, please.

COAST. Why not? he's left it to you, everybody knows it, and it must be a good deal.

GEORGIANA. I can't and won't discuss that with you.

COAST. [*Goes to* GEORGIANA.] I wish you didn't feel so hard against me, Georgy!

GEORGIANA. To tell you the truth, Sam, I don't think I feel anything about you.

COAST. Oh, Lord, that's worse! I guess I won't stop at Denver, — I'll go away out to the mine for a while and join father. — Good-by.

GEORGIANA. Good-by.

[*Rises.*

COAST. I swore off a lot of things when I thought I was going to get you, Georgiana!

GEORGIANA. [*Without any feeling.*] I'm glad!

COAST. But I don't want to put on any bluff. I've sworn 'em all on again.

[*Going Left.*

GEORGIANA. [*Same voice, without feeling.*] I'm sorry.

COAST. [*Turning quickly and with an absurd ray of hope.*] Are you *really?*

GEORGIANA. [*Looking at him a second.*] No, Sam, I suppose, if I tell the truth, I don't really care. You see, somehow or other, I don't care very much about anything.

COAST. [*Discouraged.*] Good-by.

GEORGIANA. Good-by, a pleasant journey.

[*She turns away.* COAST *is about to go when he meets* LOUISE, *who enters Left.*

LOUISE. Good morning, Sam. Where are you off to?

[*Going to the sofa.*

COAST. Chicago first, Lou, and then Denver and eventually — hell, I guess!

[*With a little gulp in his throat he goes out quickly.*

LOUISE. What's the matter with him — he hasn't proposed to you again?

GEORGIANA. He's going away, and he's made Steve —

LOUISE. [*Interrupting.*] I've just seen Steve, he's told me. Steve's coming uptown soon — to see you —

GEORGIANA. [*Sitting on the sofa beside* LOUISE.] To see me — why?

LOUISE. He'll tell you better than I — I feel happy, Georgiana.

GEORGIANA. I'm glad.

LOUISE. And I believe you'll be happy again.

GEORGIANA. Thank you, Louise!

[MRS. CARLEY *enters Right and sits by the table.*

MRS. CARLEY. You back, Louise! I'm that

tired, shopping. I'm buying everything I can think of we'll be likely to need for months. There'll be *no* pleasure buying things when, instead of having them sent to 2 East 71st Street, we have to say 329 West 143rd!

GEORGIANA. [*Rises and goes back of the table.*] Mother, dear, you may not have to leave here after all!

MRS. CARLEY. What do you mean?

GEORGIANA. Louise will tell you. I've promised to sit through lunch with the children this morning if you don't mind, and it's their hour.

MRS. CARLEY. But, Georgiana —

[*She is interrupted by a gesture and a glance from* LOUISE *to let* GEORGIANA *go.*

GEORGIANA. [*Sweetly.*] Yes? Do you want me for anything, dear?

[LOUISE *repeats the gesture, unnoticed by* GEORGIANA.

MRS. CARLEY. Oh, no.

GEORGIANA. If you want me —

MRS. CARLEY. No.

GEORGIANA. Louise, I told Bella Shindle I'd help her get up an article this morning on the drawing-room and dining room for her sister, — you know — who has a friend who writes for the weekly papers. You don't mind, do you?

LOUISE. No.

GEORGIANA. Of course, if you *do* mind —

LOUISE. But I don't, not the least in the world.

GEORGIANA. [*Smiling.*] Bella says it will be a great thing for her sister's reputation — what she calls such a "select" house as ours — and buy her a new hat besides. So I thought we'd better.

[*She goes out Right.*

MRS. CARLEY. Did you ever know any one so changed? She hasn't been horrid to me once since he died. It makes me feel perfectly dreadful to have her treat me so nice.

[*Almost crying, crosses to Left.*

LOUISE. Mother, you know Mrs. Coleman sent for me just now.

MRS. CARLEY. Yes?

LOUISE. Well, why, do you suppose?

MRS. CARLEY. I don't know, but I hope you'll tell me that, too, sometime — what about Steve?

LOUISE. That must wait, mother — Dick Coleman —

MRS. CARLEY. What? Don't tell me he made another will, and didn't leave Georgiana his money.

LOUISE. No, it's good news for Georgiana.

I'm almost as afraid to tell you as to tell her. [*Whispers.*] Dick Coleman may be alive, after all.

MRS. CARLEY. Louise!

LOUISE. It is possible he was one of the three men who arrived at San Francisco nearly a week ago.

MRS. CARLEY. Who were taken prisoners by the Ladrones and escaped?

LOUISE. Yes! The three men who got away from Cebú in a boat and were picked up by a German steamer. It seems more than probable. They got one name wrong in the despatches, making it "*Richard Cotten*" — who was also missing — instead of "*Richard Coleman.*"

MRS. CARLEY. But how did you find out all this?

LOUISE. From Mrs. Coleman. And it's all

in the morning paper, and we never took the trouble to look!

MRS. CARLEY. I read the society notes — it wasn't in there.

LOUISE. Well, the Colemans saw it and telegraphed at once to Washington for confirmation.

MRS. CARLEY. Did they get it?

LOUISE. Not yet. But we're all in the greatest hopes!

MRS. CARLEY. But if Dick Coleman was with those other men in San Francisco, why didn't he telegraph home?

LOUISE. That's the one thing that makes still a dreadful doubt. [*Rises and rings the bell.*] The Colemans are nearly mad waiting for their reply from Washington.

MRS. CARLEY. Shall you tell Georgiana?

[*She rises.*

LOUISE. Not till we are a little more certain. It would be dreadful to open the wound of her grief again for nothing. Oh, if it's only true!

MRS. CARLEY. And you've seen Steve?

LOUISE. Yes, he went off at once to the newspaper to see how authentic their information was, and then he was going on to the Colemans. [MOLES *enters Left in answer to the bell.*] Moles, bring me the morning paper.

MOLES. [*Unable to suppress his excitement.*] I've read it, m'm! We're all nearly crazy over it downstairs. Lizzie's took to crying and can't answer her bells. — Is it true, Mrs. Carley?

LOUISE. Yes, we hope it's true, Moles.

MOLES. Thank God, m'm, if you'll excuse me!

LOUISE. But we're not sure yet, and you mustn't let anything drop before Miss Georgiana till we are certain.

MOLES. No, m'm.

[*He goes out.*

MRS. CARLEY. Oughtn't we to give Georgiana a hint to prepare her in some way?

LOUISE. Perhaps, if we do it very carefully.

MRS. CARLEY. It seems awful to me not to tell her right out. Of course we won't have Dick Coleman's money to help live on now, if he's back.

LOUISE. Never mind that, mother.

[MOLES *returns with the paper.*

MOLES. Here is the paper, m'm, and Miss Shindle is come — she says to interview the drawing-room.

LOUISE. Very well — tell Miss Georgiana.

MOLES. Yes, m'm.

[*Goes out Right.* LOUISE *looks through the paper.* MOLES *brings in* BELLA. BELLA *shows signs of suppressed excitement.*

BELLA. Oh, Mrs. Carley, have you seen the papers — isn't it splendid?

LOUISE. Yes, if it's only true. We're trying to make sure!

[LOUISE *finds the place in the paper.*

MRS. CARLEY. [*Rising.*] She doesn't know yet.

BELLA. Oh, Mrs. Carley!

LOUISE. We're waiting to be *sure*, and that we may be almost any minute.

BELLA. Mercy! I don't see how you can keep it to yourself.

MRS. CARLEY. You might give her a little hint, Bella, if you get a chance.

BELLA. I wouldn't dare. If I opened my mouth wide enough to give her a hint, I know it would all burst out!

LOUISE. As soon as Mr. Carley comes, make an

excuse to leave her, won't you? We expect him to bring us some definite news?

BELLA. Yes, indeed!

[MRS. CARLEY *and* LOUISE *go out Left, as* GEORGIANA *comes in.*

GEORGIANA. [*Pleasantly.*] Good morning, Bella.

[*She sits by the table.*

BELLA. Good morning, ain't it a fine morning?

GEORGIANA. Is it? I haven't been out.

BELLA. I'm scared to death. [*Laughing nervously.*] I ain't going to write the article myself, you know. It's my sister's husband's friend—she's real literary enough! She's got a typewriter.

GEORGIANA. One can't do everything in this world, Bella, and you must be content with being a real *artiste* in your own profession.

BELLA. Yes, I will say without boasting, so to speak, I don't believe there's a soul in New York

who can make hair go further and wear less, than me! [*Laughs heartily.*] What's this room? Of course it's one of them Louis, I suppose, ain't it? [*Looks around the room.*] Let me see, is it Louis Eleventimes? I saw Henry Irving in that, it was fine!

GEORGIANA. No, Bella, Henry Irving has never been in this room, and it's Louis XVI.

BELLA. Oh, of course! [*Writing.*] How well you're looking, Miss Georgiana. Look to me kinder as if you thought good news was in the wind!

[*She glances at her surreptitiously, but down again quickly, frightened.*

GEORGIANA. Why, Bella?

BELLA. Oh, that's just my idea, that's all. What might this picture be? Shall we say — er — er — Michael Ange?

GEORGIANA. [*Suppressing a smile.*] No, that is a Van Dyck.

BELLA. Of course! I might have known! [*Writing.*] This entire room is a fine bit, ain't it? All Louis — [*She looks back in her book.*] 16, as a piece, I suppose?

GEORGIANA. Yes.

BELLA. So I see! My! How I love all this kind of thing. I couldn't live without a lot o' bric-a-brah lying around sort of careless like and undusted. These tapestries are real, I presume?

GEORGIANA. Yes.

BELLA. I thought so! I got a beautiful piece of tapestry over my washstand, hand-painted, and all the faces and clothes outlined in chenille cross-stitch by the Singer Sewing Machine — but it's not quite the same as yours.

GEORGIANA. It must be very pretty.

BELLA. Oh, it adds a touch! Mr. Gootch gave it to me for an engagement present.

GEORGIANA. Does Mr. Gootch ever speak of Mr. Coleman?

BELLA. He worships him — naturally, as Mr. Coleman got wounded in both arms carrying him to a safe place! Mr. Gootch says as there wasn't a man in the regiment braver or as popular as Mr. Coleman. Don't you think, perhaps, sometimes, maybe, Miss Georgiana —

[*She stops near* GEORGIANA.

GEORGIANA. Maybe what —?

BELLA. Oh, I dunno — I —

GEORGIANA. [*Rising and going to the sofa.*] Come, Bella, we must get on with your article.

[*A pause.*

BELLA. [*Looking about.*] Why, you haven't got a cosy corner, have you? And yet you seem

to go in for the real artistic! I don't know what my sister 'n' I'd do without our cosy corner! It is draped with a fish net, and has paper butterflies and beetles in it! Very artistic! And she's got — well, really now, I believe she's got at least *eleven pillers;* counting the two ticking ones that has their covers come off at night for our bed!

GEORGIANA. [*Rising nervously.*] Bella, I have some colored dresses I'd like to give you for your trousseau, if you care to take them. They've not been worn very much.

BELLA. Oh, Miss Georgiana, of course I'd take 'em — only, I don't know, I sort of feel it in my bones you'll wear 'em yourself.

[STEVEN *enters Left suddenly. He tries to conceal his great excitement.* MOLES *is with him.*

STEVEN. [*To* MOLES.] Tell Mrs. Carley I want to see her here, please.

MOLES. Yes, sir.

[*He goes out Right.*

STEVEN. Hello, Georgy!

GEORGIANA. Steve!

STEVEN. Good morning, Miss Shindle.

BELLA. Good morning, Mr. Carley. I must be going now, Miss Georgiana.

GEORGIANA. But have you got enough for the article?

BELLA. Oh, yes, miss — Louise furniture, the Van Wyck picture, tapestry effects — etcetra. Thank you ever so much. Good-by!

GEORGIANA. Wait, I'll tell you about the dining room.

[*She goes out with* BELLA *Left, and* LOUISE *enters.*

STEVEN. Louise, it's true!

LOUISE. Oh, Steve!

STEVEN. It was a press telegram and has been verified by private wire. Besides, Mrs. Coleman has a telegram from Dick himself.

LOUISE. From where?

STEVEN. From San Francisco, when the Colemans were at Palm Beach. Their servants foolishly *mailed* the telegram to them, and before it arrived in Florida, they were on their way North, coming by easy stages.

LOUISE. [*Rises.*] And the message only just caught up with them! Who will tell her?

[MOLES *comes in Left with a note.*

MOLES. A note just come for you, sir, by Mr. Coleman's man.

STEVEN. We must break it very gently, prepare her a little for it if we can. [*To* MOLES.] Thanks. [*Takes note, opens it, and reads it hurriedly.*] He's there! With his father and mother!

MOLES. [*Forgetting himself.*] Oh, sir — I'm so glad! Excuse me, sir, but we're all so glad, sir — any answer sir?

[*His eyes fill up.*

STEVEN. No, only tell Miss Georgiana I want to see her.

MOLES. [*Who has to swallow a lump in his throat before he can speak.*] Yes, sir.

[*He goes ou. Right.*

LOUISE. [*Wiping her eyes, goes to* STEVEN.] What does it say?

STEVEN. [*Reads the note.*] "Dick and the answer from Washington arrived together!" He'll be over here at once — they won't keep him.

LOUISE. We must tell her before he gets here.

STEVEN. Yes.

LOUISE. We must do it very carefully.

STEVEN. But we mustn't lose any time.

[GEORGIANA *comes in during this last speech, overhearing it. A movement is made by others on* GEORGIANA'S *entrance.*

GEORGIANA. "Losing time!" Am I keeping you from anything? I'm very sorry!

LOUISE. [*Very tenderly, and hiding her emotion.*] No, you're not keeping us, Georgy, we only wanted to see you, that's all.

GEORGIANA. [*Going to her.*] Why?

STEVEN. [*Also very tenderly.*] Do we have to have a reason to want to see you, isn't that we love you enough?

GEORGIANA. Yes, but why do you speak to me like this? — it's very kind of you — only — what does it mean?

[*Smiling a little nervously, they hesitate.*

LOUISE. Steve has news for you, Georgy.

GEORGIANA. I know about it, Coast told me.

STEVEN. It isn't that, Georgy.

GEORGIANA. What is it, then? How serious you both look.

[*She becomes frightened.*

STEVEN. This is *good* news.

GEORGIANA. *Good* news!

LOUISE. Yes.

STEVEN. The best in the world!

GEORGIANA. For me?

STEVEN. For you!

GEORGIANA. [*A second's pause, she speaks then in a low voice.*] No, it can't be! It can't be!

STEVEN. Yes, it *is*, Georgy!

GEORGIANA. No!

STEVEN. Georgy! It *is!*

[MOLES *enters Left.*

MOLES. [*With voice full of happy emotion which he cannot disguise.*] Please, sir —

[*He hesitates.*

STEVEN. Show him here, Moles.

[MOLES *lowers his head and goes out.*

GEORGIANA. Dick —?

[*She looks from* STEVEN *to* LOUISE. *They all show her by their faces and movements that it is true.*

GEORGIANA. [*Whispers.*] Dick!

[*She stands waiting, breathless.* STEVEN *steals out with his arm about* LOUISE.

GEORGIANA. [*Excitedly, to herself.*] *Come!* No, no! It can't be true! It can't be true! They killed him, those brutes out there! You told me so! Every one believed it! I believed it! And so you want me to believe he's alive! That he's here! In this house, coming into this room — that I shall see —

[*She stops suddenly, looking up. The door*

knob of the door Left turns. Every nerve in GEORGIANA'S *body grows tense.* MOLES *opens the door and lets* DICK *pass in and closes the door behind him.*

GEORGIANA. [*Cries out.*] Dick!

[DICK *goes towards her, but stops. She starts towards him, stops a moment, and they look at each other, unable to speak, — then she goes on slowly, almost fearfully, till she reaches him.*

DICK. [*Moving to her.*] Georgy!

[*He stands before her with both arms bandaged in a sling.*

GEORGIANA. [*Whispers.*] Dick! [*Looks him straight in the eyes — he looks back. She cries out.*] Dick!

[*Holding out her arms toward him.*

DICK. Georgy! [*He looks down at his arms.*] My arms — I can't —

GEORGIANA. Oh, Dick!

[*And putting her arms tenderly about his neck, she holds him close, as he leans down his head and kisses her, and*

THE CURTAIN FALLS